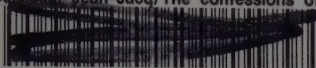


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THE CONFESSIONS  
OF  
JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU

PREFACE BY  
JULES CLARETIE

ILLUSTRATED BY MAURICE LELOIR

VOLUME TWO



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# THE CONFESSIONS OF JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU

BOOK IV—FIRST PERIOD

[1731-1732]



ET anyone judge my surprise and grief at not finding her on my arrival. I now began to feel regret at having abandoned Monsieur le Maître, and my uneasiness increased when I learned the misfortunes that had befallen him. His box of music, containing all his fortune—that precious box, preserved with so much care and fatigue—had been seized at Lyons by means of Comte Dortan,

who had received information from the chapter of our having absconded with it. In vain did Le Maître reclaim his property, his means of existence, the labor of his life; his right to the music in question was at least subject to litigation, but even that liberty was not allowed him, the affair being instantly decided by the law of the stronger. Thus poor Le Maître lost the fruit of his talents, the labor of his youth, and the resource of his old age.

Nothing was wanting to render the news I had received truly afflicting, but I was at an age when great calamities can be sustained; accordingly I soon found consolation. I expected shortly to hear news of Madame de Warens, though I was ignorant of her address, and she knew nothing of my return. As to my desertion of Le Maître, all things considered, I did not find it so very culpable. I had been serviceable to him in his retreat; it was not in my power to give him any further assistance. Had I remained with him in France, it would not have cured his complaint; I could not have saved his music, and should only have doubled his expense. In this point of view I then saw my conduct; I see it otherwise now. A villainous action does not torment us at the instant we commit it, but on recollection, and sometimes even after a number of years have elapsed, for the remembrance is not to be extinguished.

The only means I had to obtain news of Mamma was to remain where I was. Where should I seek her at Paris, or how bear the expense of such a journey? Sooner or later, there was no place where I could be so certain to hear of her as at Annecy; this consideration determined me to remain there, though my conduct was but indifferent. I did not go to

the bishop who had already befriended me, and might continue to do so: my patroness was not present, and I feared his reprimands on the subject of our flight. Neither did I go to the seminary; Monsieur Gros was no longer there; in short, I went to none of my acquaintance. I would gladly have visited Madame l'Intendante, but did not dare. I did worse; I sought out Monsieur Venture, whom, notwithstanding my enthusiasm, I had never thought of since my departure. I found him quite gay, in high spirits, and the universal favorite in Annecy; the ladies besieged him. This success completed my infatuation. I saw nothing but Monsieur Venture; he almost made me forget Madame de Warens. That I might profit more at ease by his instructions and example, I proposed to share his lodging, to which he readily consented. It was at a shoemaker's—a pleasant, jovial fellow, who, in his country dialect, called his wife nothing but *salopière*, an appellation which she certainly merited. Venture took care to augment their differences, though under an appearance of doing the direct contrary, throwing out in a distant manner, and provincial accent, hints that produced the utmost effect, and furnished such scenes as were sufficient to make one die with laughter. Thus the mornings passed without our thinking of them; at two or three o'clock we took some refreshment. Venture then went to his various engagements, where he supped, while I walked alone, meditating on his great merit, coveting and admiring his rare talents, and cursing my own unlucky stars, that did not call me to so happy a life. How little did I then know of myself! Mine had been a hundred times more delightful, had I not been so great a fool, or known better how to enjoy it.



Madame de Warens had taken no one with her but Anet; Merceret, her chambermaid, whom I have before mentioned, still remained in her mistress's rooms. Merceret was something older than myself, not pretty, but tolerably agreeable; a good-natured Fribourgeoise, free from malice, having no fault to my knowledge but being a little refractory with her mistress. I often went to see her; she was an old acquaintance, who recalled to my remembrance one more beloved, and this made her dear to me. She had several friends, and among others one Mademoiselle Giraud, a Genevese, who, for my sins, took it into her head to have an inclination for me, always pressing Merceret, when she returned her visits, to bring me with her. As I liked Merceret, I felt no disinclination to accompany her; besides, I met there with other young people whose company pleased me. As for Mademoiselle Giraud, who offered every kind of enticement, nothing could increase the aversion I had for her. When she drew near me, with her dried black snout smeared with Spanish snuff, I could hardly refrain from expectorating, but, being pleased with her visitors, I took patience. Among these were two girls who, to pay their court either to Mademoiselle Giraud or myself, strove to make much of me. I conceived this to be only friendship, but have since thought it depended only on myself to have discovered something more though I did not even suspect it at the time.

Besides, seamstresses, chambermaids, or milliners never tempted me; I sighed for ladies! Everyone has his peculiar taste; this has ever been mine, being in this particular of a different opinion from Horace. Yet it is not vanity of riches or rank that attracts me: it is a well-preserved complexion,

fine hands, elegance of ornament, an air of delicacy and neatness throughout the whole person; higher taste in the manner of attiring and expressing themselves, a finer or better-made gown, small feet handsomely shod, ribbons, lace, and well-dressed hair; I even prefer those who have less natural beauty, provided they are elegantly decorated. I freely confess this preference is very ridiculous, yet my heart gives in to it spite of my understanding.

Well, even this advantage presented itself, and it only depended on my own resolution to have seized the opportunity. How do I love, from time to time, to return to those moments of my youth, which were so charmingly delightful; so short, so scarce, and enjoyed at so cheap a rate! how fondly do I wish to dwell on them! Even yet the remembrance of these scenes warms my heart with a chaste rapture, which appears necessary to reanimate my drooping courage and enable me to sustain the weariness of my latter days.

The appearance of Aurora seemed so delightful one morning that, putting on my clothes, I hastened into the country to see the rising of the sun. I enjoyed that pleasure in its utmost extent. It was one week after midsummer; the earth had put on its best array, and was covered with verdure and flowers; the nightingales, whose soft warblings were almost concluded, seemed to vie with each other, and in concert with birds of various kinds, to bid adieu to spring, and hail the approach of a beautiful summer's day—one of those lovely days that are no longer to be enjoyed at my present age, and which have never been seen on the melancholy soil I now inhabit.

I had rambled insensibly to a considerable distance from

the town. The heat augmenting, I was walking in the shade along a valley by the side of a brook, when I heard behind me the steps of horses and the voices of some females who, though they seemed embarrassed, did not laugh the less heartily on that account. I turn round, hear myself called by name, and approaching find two young people of my acquaintance, Mademoiselle de Graffenried and Mademoiselle Galley, who, not being very excellent horsewomen, could not make their horses cross the rivulet. Mademoiselle de Graffenried was a young lady of Berne, very amiable, who, having been sent from that country for some youthful folly, had imitated Madame de Warens, at whose house I had sometimes seen her, but not having, like her, a pension, she had gladly attached herself to Mademoiselle Galley, who had prevailed on her mother to engage her young friend as a companion till she could be otherwise provided for. Mademoiselle Galley was one year younger than her friend, prettier, more delicate, more refined, and, to complete all, slender, yet well formed—the most interesting period of girlhood. They loved each other tenderly, and the good disposition of both could not fail to render their union durable, if some lover did not derange it. They informed me they were going to Toune, an old château belonging to Madame Galley, and implored my assistance to make their horses cross the stream, not being able to compass it themselves.\* I would have given each a cut or two with the whip, but they feared I might be kicked and themselves thrown. I therefore had recourse to another expedient. I took hold of Mademoiselle Galley's horse and led him through the brook, the water reaching half-way up my legs. The other followed without any difficulty. This done, I would have



paid my compliments to the ladies, and walked off like a great booby as I was, but after whispering each other, Mademoiselle de Graffenried said, "No, no; you must not think to escape us thus; you have got wet in our service, and we must in conscience see that you are properly dried. If you please, you must go with us; you are now our prisoner." My heart began to beat. I looked at Mademoiselle Galley. "Yes, yes," added she, laughing at my fearful look, "our prisoner of war; come, get up behind her; we shall give a good account of you." "But, mademoiselle," continued I, "I have not the honor to be acquainted with your mother; what will she say on my arrival?" "Her mother," replied Mademoiselle de Graffenried, "is not at Touné. We are alone; we shall return at night, and you shall come back with us."

The stroke of electricity has not a more instantaneous effect than these words produced on me. Leaping up behind Mademoiselle de Graffenried, I trembled with joy, and when it became necessary to clasp her in order to hold myself on, my heart beat so violently that she perceived it, and told me hers beat also from a fear of falling. In my present posture this was almost an invitation to verify her assertion, yet I did not dare; and during the whole way my arms served as a girdle—a very close one, I must confess—without being for a moment displaced. Some women who read this would be for giving me a box on the ear, and, truly, I deserved it.

The gayety of the journey and the chat of those girls so enlivened me that, during the whole time we passed together, we never ceased talking for a moment. They had set me so thoroughly at ease that my tongue spoke as fast as my eyes, though not exactly the same things. Some minutes, indeed,

when I was left alone with either, the conversation became a little embarrassed, but neither of them was absent long enough to allow time for explaining the cause.

Arrived at Toune, and myself well dried, we breakfasted together, after which it was necessary to settle the important business of preparing dinner. The young ladies cooked, kissing from time to time the farmer's children, while the poor scullion looked on with vexation. Provisions had been sent for from town, and there was everything necessary for a good dinner, but unhappily they had forgotten wine. This forgetfulness was by no means astonishing in girls who seldom drank any, but I was sorry for the omission, as I had reckoned on its help, thinking it might add to my confidence. They were sorry likewise, and perhaps from the same motive; though I have no reason to say this, for their lively and charming gayety was innocence itself; besides, there were two of them—what could they expect from me? They sent everywhere about the neighborhood to seek for wine, but none could be procured, so poor and sober are the peasants in those parts. As they were expressing their concern, I begged them not to give themselves any uneasiness on my account, for while with them I had no occasion for wine to intoxicate me. This was the only gallantry I ventured at during the whole of the day, and I believe the sly rogues saw well enough that I said nothing but the truth.

We dined in the farm kitchen. The two friends were seated on the benches, one on each side the long table, and their guest at the end, between them, on a three-legged stool. What a dinner! how charming the remembrance! While we can enjoy, at so small an expense, such pure, such true







Aurice Leloir inv.

Mordant sc.







delights, why should we be solicitous for others? Never did supper at one of the *petites maisons* of Paris equal this; I do not only say for real pleasure and gayety, but even for sensuality.

After dinner we were economical; instead of drinking the coffee we had reserved at breakfast, we kept it for an afternoon collation, with cream and some cakes which they had brought with them, and to keep our appetites in play we went into the orchard, meaning to finish our dessert with cherries. I got into a tree, throwing them down bunches, from which they returned the stones through the branches. Once Mademoiselle Galley, holding out her apron and drawing back her head, stood so fair, and I took such good aim, that I dropped a bunch into her bosom. On her laughing, I said to myself, "Why are not my lips cherries? how gladly would I throw them there likewise!"

Thus the day passed with the greatest freedom, yet with the utmost decency; not a single equivocal word, not one attempt at double-meaning pleasantry; yet this delicacy was not affected, we only performed the parts our hearts dictated; in short, my modesty, some will say my folly, was such that the greatest familiarity that escaped me was once kissing the hand of Mademoiselle Galley. It is true, the attending circumstances helped to stamp a value on this trifling favor: we were alone, I was embarrassed, her eyes were fixed on the ground, and my lips, instead of uttering words, were pressed to her hand, which she drew gently back after the salute, without any appearance of displeasure. I know not what I should have said to her; her friend entered, and at that moment seemed ugly.

At length they bethought themselves that they must return to town before night; even now we had but just time to reach it by daylight, and we hastened our departure in the same order as we came. Had I pleased myself, I should certainly have reversed this order, for the glance of Mademoiselle Galley had reached my heart; but I dared not mention it, and the proposal could not reasonably come from her. On the way we expressed our sorrow that the day was over; but far from complaining of the shortness of its duration, we were conscious of having prolonged it by every possible amusement.

I quitted them almost at the very spot where they had taken me up. With what regret did we part! With what pleasure did we form projects to renew our meeting! A dozen hours thus passed together were worth ages of familiarity. The sweet remembrance of this day cost those amiable girls nothing; the tender union which reigned among us equaled more lively pleasures, with which it could not have co-existed. We loved each other without shame or mystery, and thus we wished to continue our affection. There is a species of enjoyment connected with innocence of manners which is superior to any other, because it has no interval or interruption; for myself, the remembrance of such a day touches me nearer, delights me more, and returns with greater rapture to my heart, than any other pleasures I ever tasted. I hardly know what my own feelings were respecting those charming girls. I do not say that, had the arrangement been in my power, I should have divided my heart between them; I felt some degree of preference. I should have been happy to have Mademoiselle de Graffenried for a mistress; yet I think, by choice, I should have liked her better as a

confidante. Be that as it may, I felt on leaving them as though I could not live without either. Who would have thought that I should never see them more, and that here must end our ephemeral amours ?

Those who read this will not fail to laugh at my gallantries, and remark, that after very promising preliminaries, my utmost advances concluded by a kiss of the hand. Yet be not mistaken, reader : I have, perhaps, tasted more real pleasure in my amours which concluded by a kiss of the hand, than you will ever have in yours, which, at the very least, begin there.

Venture, who had gone to bed late the night before, came in soon after me. I did not now see him with my usual satisfaction, and took care not to inform him how I had passed the day. The ladies had spoken of him slightly, and appeared discontented at finding me in such bad hands. This hurt him in my esteem ; besides, whatever diverted my ideas from them was at this time disagreeable. However, he soon brought me back to myself by speaking of the situation of my affairs, which was too critical to last ; for, though I spent very little, my slender finances were almost exhausted. I was without resource ; no news of Mamma ; I knew not what would become of me, and felt a cruel pang at heart to see the friend of Mademoiselle Galley reduced to beggary.

Venture informed me that he had spoken of me to Monsieur le Juge-mage, and would take me next day to dine with him ; that he was a man who by means of his friends might render me essential service. In other respects he was a desirable acquaintance, being a man of wit and letters, of agreeable conversation, one who possessed talents and loved them in others. Then, mingling, as was his wont, the most



serious concerns with the most trifling thing. He showed me a pretty couple, which had come from Paris on an air in one of Montreuil's aerons, which was then being played. Monsieur Simon, the Japanese, was so pleased with this couple, that he desired to make another to answer to it in the same air. He had asked Venturi to write another, and the latter would have me to make a third, that so he expressed it they might see couples start up every day like the aerons in the Roman Campagna.

In the night not being able to sleep, I composed a couple, my first essay in poetry. It was possible, better, or at least composed with more taste, than it would have been the preceding night, the subject turning upon a very tender incident to which my heart was now entirely devoted. In the morning I showed my performance to Venturi, who, being pleased with the couple, put it in his pocket without saying any more, but he had made his. We dined with Monsieur Simon, who talked us very pleasantly. The conversation was agreeable, whilst it could not be otherwise between two men of natural intelligence, improved by reading. But as I wrote my paper, that which was to be done in silence. Venturi at last mentioned the couple, saying that I was to know that mine was ever added to.

Monsieur Simon appeared pleased with my performance, whilst it was shown him that he was of use in the matter. He had then put in Monsieur de Venturi, but he was never paid much attention to me. It is then the Chinese, the one I saw at the moment, which thought of no more, as regard to the object I then had in view, was afterwards the Chinese of the Japanese which made me to be a little more

I should be wrong not to give some account of his person, since, from his office of magistrate, and the reputation of wit on which he piqued himself, no idea could otherwise be formed of it. Monsieur le Juge-mage Simon was certainly not three<sup>5</sup> feet high; his legs, spare, straight, and tolerably long, would have added something to his stature had they been vertical, but they stood in the direction of an open pair of compasses. His body was not only short, but thin, being in every respect of most inconceivable smallness—when naked he must have appeared like a grasshopper. His head was of the common size, to which appertained a well-formed face, a noble look, and tolerably fine eyes; in short, it appeared a borrowed head, stuck on a miserable stump. He might very well have dispensed with dress, for his large wig alone covered him from head to foot.

He had two voices, perfectly different, which intermingled perpetually in his conversation, forming at first a diverting, but afterwards a very disagreeable, contrast. One, grave and sonorous, was, if I may hazard the expression, the voice of his head; the other, clear, sharp, and piercing, the voice of his body. When he paid particular attention, and spoke leisurely, so as to control his breath, he could continue his deep tone; but if he were the least animated, or attempted a lively accent, his voice sounded like the whistling of a key, and it was with the utmost difficulty that he could return to the bass.

With the figure I have just described, and which is by no means caricatured, Monsieur Simon was gallant, ever entertaining the ladies with soft tales, and carrying the decoration of his person even to foppery. Willing to make use of every

advantage, he often, during the morning, gave audience in bed; for, when a handsome head was discovered on the pillow, no one could have imagined that there was little else. This circumstance gave birth to scenes which I am certain are yet remembered by all Annecy.

One morning, when he expected to give audience in bed, or rather on the bed, wearing a handsome night-cap ornamented with two large knots of rose-colored ribbon, a countryman arriving knocked at the door. The maid happened to be out; Monsieur le Juge-mage, therefore, hearing the knock repeated, cried, "Come in," and as he spoke rather loud, it was in his acute tone. The man entered, looked about, endeavoring to discover whence the female voice proceeded, and at length, seeing a handsome head-dress set off with ribbons, was about to leave the room, making the supposed lady a hundred apologies. Monsieur Simon, in a rage, screamed the more shrilly; and the countryman, confirmed in his opinion, and conceiving himself to be insulted, began railing in his turn, saying that apparently she was nothing better than a common street-walker, and that Monsieur le Juge-mage should be ashamed of setting such ill examples. The enraged magistrate having no other weapon than the chamber-vessel, was just going to throw it at the poor fellow's head as his servant returned.

This dwarf, ill-used by nature as to his person, was recompensed by possessing an understanding naturally agreeable, which he had been careful to cultivate. Though he was esteemed a good lawyer, he did not like his profession, delighting more in the finer parts of literature, which he studied with success; above all, he had caught thence that super-

ficial brilliancy, the art of pleasing in conversation, even with the ladies. He knew by heart all the little witticisms of the "Ana," and others of the like kind, which he well knew how to make the most of, relating with an air of secrecy, and as an anecdote of yesterday, what had happened sixty years before. He understood music, and could sing agreeably in his masculine voice; in short, for a magistrate, he had many pleasing talents. By flattering the ladies of Annecy, he became fashionable among them; he appeared like a little monkey in their train. He even pretended to favors, at which they were much amused. One Madame d'Epagny used to say that the utmost favor he could aspire to was to kiss a lady's knee.

As he was well read, and spoke fluently on literature, his conversation was both amusing and instructive. When I afterwards took a taste for study, I cultivated his acquaintance, and found my account in it. When at Chambéry, I sometimes went from thence to see him. His praise increased my emulation, to which he added some good advice respecting the prosecution of my studies, which I found useful. Unhappily, this weakly body contained a very feeling soul. Some years after, he was chagrined by I know not what unlucky affair, but it cost him his life. This was really unfortunate, for he was a good little man, whom at first acquaintance one laughed at, but afterwards loved. Though our situations in life were very little allied with each other, yet, as I received some useful lessons from him, I thought gratitude demanded that I should dedicate a few sentences to his memory.

As soon as I found myself at liberty, I ran into the street where Mademoiselle Galley lived, flattering myself that I should



see some one go in or out, or at least open a window; but I was mistaken—not even a cat appeared, the house remaining as close all the time as if it had been uninhabited. The street was small and lonely; anyone loitering there was likely to be noticed; and from time to time people of the neighborhood passed in and out. I was much embarrassed, thinking my person might be known, and the cause that brought me there conjectured; this idea tortured me, for I have ever preferred the honor and happiness of those I love to my own pleasures.

At length, weary of playing the Spanish lover, and having no guitar, I determined to write to Mademoiselle de Graffenried. I should have preferred writing to her friend, but did not dare to take that liberty, as it appeared more proper to begin with her to whom I owed the acquaintance, and with whom I was more familiar. Having written my letter, I took it to Mademoiselle Giraud, as the young ladies had agreed at parting, they having furnished me with this expedient. Mademoiselle Giraud was a quilter, and sometimes worked at Madame Galley's, which procured her free admission to the house. I must confess I was not thoroughly satisfied with this choice of a messenger, but was cautious of starting difficulties, fearing that if I objected to her no other might be named, and it was impossible to intimate that she had an inclination toward me herself. I even felt humiliated that she should think that I could imagine her to be of the same sex as those young ladies; in a word, I accepted her agency rather than none, and availed myself of it at all events.

At the very first word, La Giraud discovered me. I must own that this was not a difficult matter, for, if sending a letter

to young girls had not spoken for itself, my foolish embarrassed air would have betrayed me. It will easily be supposed that the employment gave her little satisfaction; she undertook it, however, and performed it faithfully. The next morning I ran to her house, and found an answer ready for me. How did I hurry away that I might have an opportunity to read and kiss it alone! though this need not be told, but the plan adopted by Mademoiselle Giraud, and in which I found more delicacy and moderation than I had expected, should. She had sense enough to conclude, that her thirty-seven years, hare's eyes, bedaubed nose, shrill voice, and blackish skin stood no chance against two elegant young girls, in all the height and bloom of beauty; she resolved, therefore, neither to betray nor assist them, choosing rather to lose me entirely than to entertain me for them.

[1732.] As La Merceret had not heard from her mistress for some time, she thought of returning to Fribourg, and the persuasions of La Giraud determined her; nay, more, she intimated that it was proper that some one should conduct her to her father's, and proposed me. As I happened to be agreeable to little Merceret, she approved the idea, and the same day they mentioned it to me as a settled affair. Finding nothing displeasing in this way of disposing of me, I consented, thinking it could not be above a week's journey at most; but La Giraud, who had arranged the whole affair, thought otherwise. It was necessary to avow the state of my finances; provision was made accordingly, La Merceret undertaking to defray my expenses; but, to retrench on one hand what was expended on the other, I advised that her little

baggage should be sent on before, and that we should proceed by easy journeys on foot. So the matter was concluded.

I am sorry to have so many girls in love with me; but, as there is nothing to be very vain of in the success of these amours, I think I may tell the truth without scruple. La Merceret younger and less artful than La Giraud, never made me so many advances, but she imitated my manners, my accents, repeated my words, and showed me all those little attentions that I ought to have paid to her. Being very timorous, she took great care that we should both sleep in the same chamber, a circumstance that usually produces some consequences between a lad of twenty and a girl of twenty-five.

For once, however, it went no further; my simplicity being such that, though La Merceret was by no means a disagreeable girl, not the smallest temptation or even idea of gallantry ever entered my head, and even if it had, I was too great a novice to have profited by it. I could not imagine how two young persons could bring themselves to sleep together, thinking that such familiarity must require ages of preparation. If poor Merceret paid my expenses in hopes of any equivalent, she was sadly cheated, for we arrived at Fribourg exactly as we had quitted Annecy.

I passed through Geneva without visiting anyone, but while going over the bridges I found myself deeply affected. Never could I see the walls of that fortunate city, never could I enter it, without feeling my heart sink from excess of tenderness. At the same time that the image of liberty elevated my soul, the ideas of equality, union, and gentleness

of manners touched me even to tears, and inspired me with a lively regret at having forfeited all these advantages. What an error was I in—but yet how natural! I imagined I saw all this in my native country, because I bore it in my heart.

It was necessary to pass through Nyon; could I do this without seeing my good father? Had I resolved on doing so, I must afterwards have died with regret. I left La Merceret at the inn, and ventured to his house. How wrong was I to fear him! On seeing me, his soul gave way to the parental tenderness with which it was filled. What tears were mingled with our embraces! He thought I was returned to him. I related my history, and informed him of my resolution. He opposed it feebly, mentioning the dangers to which I exposed myself, and telling me the shortest follies were the best, but did not attempt to keep me by force, in which particular I think he acted rightly; but it is certain he did not do everything in his power to retain me, even by fair means,—whether, after the step I had taken, he thought I ought not to return, or was puzzled at my age to know what to do with me. I have since found that he conceived—though not unnaturally—a very unjust opinion of my traveling companion. My stepmother, a good woman, rather smooth-tongued, put on an appearance of wishing me to stay for supper. I did not, however, comply, but told them I proposed remaining longer with them on my return, leaving as a deposit my little packet, that had come by water, and would have been an incumbrance had I taken it with me. I continued my journey the next morning, well satisfied that I had seen my father, and had taken courage to do my duty.



We arrived without any accident at Fribourg. Towards the conclusion of the journey the politeness of Mademoiselle Merceret slightly diminished, and after our arrival she treated me even with coldness. Her father, who was certainly not in opulent circumstances, did not show me much attention, and I was obliged to lodge at a cabaret. I went to see them the next morning, and received an invitation to dine there, which I accepted. We separated without tears at night; I returned to my paltry lodging, and departed the second day after my arrival, almost without knowing whither to go.

This was again a circumstance of my life in which Providence offered me precisely what was necessary to make my days pass happily. La Merceret was a good girl, neither witty nor handsome, but yet not ugly; not very lively, but tolerably rational, except while under the influence of some little humors, which evaporated in tears, without any violent outbreak of temper. She had a real inclination for me; I might have married her without difficulty, and followed her father's business. My taste for music would have made me love her; I should have settled at Fribourg, a small town, not pretty, but inhabited by very worthy people. I should certainly have missed great pleasures, but should have lived in peace to my last hour, and I must be allowed to know best what I should have gained by such a step.

I did not return to Nyon, but to Lausanne, wishing to gratify myself with a view of that beautiful lake, which is seen there in its utmost extent. The greater part of my secret motives for decision have had no more solid grounds. Distant expectation has rarely strength enough to influence my actions, the uncertainty of the future ever making me regard

projects whose execution requires a length of time as deceitful lures. I lend myself to visionary scenes of hope as readily as others, provided they cost me nothing; but, if attended with any prolonged trouble, I have done with them. The smallest, the most trifling pleasure that is conveniently within my reach, tempts me more than all the joys of paradise. I must except, however, those pleasures which are necessarily followed by pain. I only love those enjoyments which are unadulterated, which can never be the case where we are conscious that we are inviting an after-repentance.

It was necessary that I should arrive at some resting-place, and the nearest was best, for, having lost my way on the road, I found myself in the evening at Moudon, where I spent all that remained of my little stock except ten kreutzers, which served to purchase my next day's dinner. Arriving in the evening at a little village near Lausanne, I went into a cabaret, without a sou in my pocket to pay for my lodging, or knowing what would become of me. I found myself extremely hungry. Setting, therefore, a good face on the matter, I ordered supper as boldly as if I had had the means to pay for it, went to bed without thought, and slept with great composure. In the morning, having breakfasted and reckoned with my host, I offered to leave my waistcoat in pledge for seven batz, which was the amount of my expenses. The honest man refused this, saying that, thank Heaven, he had never stripped anyone, and would not now begin for seven batz; adding that I should keep my waistcoat and pay him when I could. I was affected with this unexpected kindness, but felt it less than I ought, or than I have since felt at the remembrance of it. I did not fail to send him his money,

with thanks, by one I could depend upon. Fifteen years after, passing through Lausanne, on my return from Italy, I felt a sensible regret at having forgotten the name both of the landlord and the house. I wished to see him, and should have felt real pleasure in recalling to his memory that worthy action. Services doubtless much more important, but rendered with ostentation, have not appeared to me so worthy of gratitude as the simple, unaffected humanity of this honest man.

As I approached Lausanne, I thought of my distress, and the means of extricating myself, without letting my stepmother perceive that I was in want. I compared myself, in this walking pilgrimage, to my friend Venture on his arrival at Annecy, and was so warmed with the idea that, without recollecting that I had neither his polished manners nor his talents, I determined to act at Lausanne the part of a little Venture—to teach music, which I did not understand, and to say I came from Paris, where I had never been. In consequence of this noble project, as there was no establishment where I could obtain a minor post, and not choosing, indeed, to venture among professional people, I inquired for some little inn, where one could lodge comfortably and cheaply, and was directed to one Perrotet, who took in boarders. This Perrotet, who was one of the best men in the world, received me very kindly, and after having heard my feigned story, promised to speak of me, and endeavor to procure me scholars, saying he should not expect any money till I had earned it. His charge for board (five écus blancs), though moderate in itself, was a great deal to me; he advised me, therefore, to begin with half-board, which consisted of good soup only for dinner, but a plentiful supper at night. I closed with this proposition, and poor

Perrotet trusted me with great cheerfulness, sparing meantime no trouble in order to be useful to me.

Having found so many good people in my youth, why do I find so few in my age? Is their race extinct? No; but I do not seek them in the same situation as formerly, among the commonalty, where, violent passions predominating only at intervals, Nature speaks her genuine sentiments. In more elevated stations they are entirely smothered, and under the mask of sentiment, only interest or vanity is heard.

Having written to my father from Lausanne, he sent my packet and some excellent advice, of which I should have profited better. I have already observed that I have moments of inconceivable delirium, in which I am entirely out of myself. I am about to relate one of the most remarkable of these. To comprehend how completely my brain was turned, and to what degree I had "Venturized" myself, if I may be allowed the expression, the many extravagances I ran into at the same time should be considered. Behold me, then, a singing-master, without knowing how to read the notation of a common song; for, if the five or six months passed with Le Maître had improved me, they could not be supposed sufficient to qualify me; besides, being taught by a master was enough to make me learn ill. Being a Parisian from Geneva, and a Catholic in a Protestant country, I thought I should change my name with my religion and country, still approaching as near as possible to the great model I had in view. He had called himself *Venture de Villeneuve*. I changed by anagram the name Rousseau into that of *Vaussore*, calling myself *Vaussore de Villeneuve*. *Venture* was a good composer, though he had not said so; I, without knowing anything of the



art, boasted of my skill to everyone, and, without ability to set down the notes of a petty vaudeville, pretended to be a composer. This was not all: being presented to Monsieur de Treytorens, professor of law, who loved music, and who gave concerts at his house, nothing would do but I must give him a proof of my talents; and accordingly I set about composing a piece for his concerts as boldly as if I had understood the science. I had the constancy to work for a fortnight at this curious business, to copy it fair, write out the different parts, and distribute them with as much assurance as if it had been a masterpiece of harmony; in short—what will hardly be believed, though strictly true—I tacked to the end of it a very pretty minuet that was commonly played about the streets, and which many may remember from these words, so well known at that time:

Quel caprice !  
Quelle injustice !  
Quoi ! ta Clarice  
Trahirait tes feux ! etc.

Venture had taught me this air with the bass, set to other words of a lewd nature, by the help of which I had retained it: thus, at the end of my composition, I put this minuet and the bass, suppressing the words, and uttering it for my own as confidently as if I had been speaking to the inhabitants of the moon.

They assemble to perform my piece: I explain to each the movement, style of execution, and reference to his part—I was fully occupied. They were five or six minutes preparing, which were for me so many ages; at length, everything being ready, I take up a fine roll of paper with which I





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strike on the leader's desk the five or six strokes signifying "Attention!" All are silent; I set myself gravely to the work of beating time; they begin. No, never since French operas existed was there such a charivari! Whatever some might have thought of my pretensions to musical talent, the effect was far worse than could have been expected. The musicians tried to stifle their laughter; the auditors opened wide their eyes and would fain have closed their ears—but this was not possible. My brutal symphonists, who desired a little sport, scraped away with a din that might have split the ears of a *quinze-vingt*. I had the courage to continue, sweating profusely, it is true, yet restrained by shame, and not daring to flee and throw up my chance. For my consolation, I heard around me the company whispering in each other's ear, or rather in mine, "This is insupportable!" another says, "What outrageous music!" another, "What a devilish caterwauling!" Poor Jean-Jacques, in this cruel moment you had no great hopes that there might come a day when, before the King of France and his whole Court, your tunes would excite whispers of surprise and applause, and that in every box around you the most amiable women would murmur softly, "What delightful sounds! what enchanting music! These strains reach the very heart!"

The minuet, however, presently put all the company in good-humor; hardly was it begun before I heard bursts of laughter from all parts, everyone congratulating me on my pretty taste in music, declaring this minuet would make me spoken of, and that I merited the loudest praise. It is not necessary to describe my uneasiness, or to own how much I deserved it.

Next day, one of the musicians, named Lutold, came to see me, and was kind enough not to congratulate me on my success. The profound conviction of my folly, shame, regret, and the state of despair to which I was reduced, with the impossibility of concealing the cruel agitation of my heart, made me open it to him: suffering, therefore, my tears to flow freely, not content with owning my ignorance, I told all, conjuring him to secrecy; he kept his word, as everyone may suppose. The same evening all Lausanne knew who I was, but, what is more remarkable, no one seemed to know, not even the good Perrotet, who, notwithstanding what had happened, continued to lodge and board me.

I led a melancholy life here; the consequences of such an essay had not rendered Lausanne a very agreeable residence. Scholars did not present themselves in crowds, not a single female, and no person of the city. I had only two or three big Germans, as stupid as I was ignorant, who fatigued me to death, and in my hands did not become very fine artists. At length I was sent for to a house, where a little serpent of a girl amused herself by showing me a parcel of music of which I could not read a note, and which she had the malice to sing before her master, to teach him how it should be executed; for I was so little able to read an air at first sight that in the charming concert I have just described I could not possibly follow the execution for a moment, or know whether they played truly what lay before me, and I myself had composed.

In the midst of so many humiliating circumstances, I had the pleasing consolation, from time to time, of receiving letters from my two charming friends. I have ever found the utmost consolatory virtue in the fair sex; when in disgrace, nothing

softens my affliction more than to be sensible that an amiable woman is interested for me. This correspondence ceased, however, soon after, and was never renewed: indeed, it was my own fault, for in changing situations I neglected sending my address, and, forced by necessity to think perpetually of myself, I soon forgot them.

It is a long time since I mentioned poor Mamma, but it would be a great mistake to suppose that I had forgotten her too; never was she a moment absent from my thoughts. I anxiously wished to find her, not merely because she was necessary to my subsistence, but because she was infinitely more necessary to my heart. My attachment to her, though lively and tender, as it really was, did not prevent my loving others, but then it was not in the same manner. All equally claimed my tenderness for their charms; but it was those charms alone I loved, my passion would not have survived them; while Mamma might have become old or ugly without my loving her the less tenderly. My heart had entirely transmitted to herself the homage it first paid to her beauty, and whatever change she might experience, while she remained herself my sentiments could not change. I was sensible how much gratitude I owed to her, but in truth I never thought of it, and whether she served me or not, it would ever have been the same thing. I loved her neither from duty, interest, nor convenience; I loved her because I was born to love her. During my attachment to another, I own this affection was in some measure deranged; I did not think so frequently of her, yet still with the same pleasure; and never, in love or otherwise, did I think of her without feeling that I could expect no true happiness in life while separated from her.



Though in so long a time I had received no news from her, I never imagined I had entirely lost her, or that she could have forgotten me. I said to myself, She will know sooner or later that I am wandering about, and will let me know that she is living: I am certain I shall find her. In the meantime, it was a pleasure to live in her native country, to walk in the streets where she had walked, and before the houses that she had lived in; yet all this was the work of conjecture, for one of my foolish peculiarities was not daring to inquire after her, or even pronounce her name without the most absolute necessity. It seemed in speaking of her that I declared all I felt, that my lips revealed the secrets of my heart, and in some degree compromised her. I believe fear was likewise mingled with this idea; I dreaded to hear ill of her. The step she had taken had been much spoken of, and something of her conduct in other respects; fearing, therefore, that aught might be said which I did not wish to hear, I preferred to hear nothing.

As my scholars did not take up much of my time, and the town where she was born was not above four leagues from Lausanne, I made it a walk of two or three days, during which time a most pleasant emotion never left me. A view of the Lake of Geneva and its admirable shore had ever, in my idea, a particular attraction which I cannot describe—not arising merely from the beauty of the prospect, but something else, I know not what, more interesting, which affects and softens me. Every time I approach the Vaudois country, I experience an impression composed of the remembrance of Madame de Warens, who was born there; of my father, who lived there; of Mademoiselle de Vulson, who was, my first

love, and of several pleasant journeys I made there in my childhood, mingled with some nameless charm, more powerfully attractive than all the rest. When that ardent desire for a life of happiness and tranquillity, which ever flees from me, and for which I was born, inflames my mind, 'tis ever to the country of Vaud, near the lake, in those charming plains, that imagination leads me. An orchard on the banks of that lake, and no other, is absolutely necessary; a firm friend, an amiable woman, a cow, and a little boat; nor could I enjoy perfect happiness on earth without all these. I laugh at the simplicity with which I have several times gone into that country for the sole purpose of seeking this imaginary happiness. I was ever surprised to find the inhabitants, particularly the women, of a disposition quite different from what I sought. How contradictory did this appear to me! The country and the people who inhabit it were never, in my idea, formed for each other.

Walking along these beautiful banks, on my way to Vévey, I gave myself up to the softest melancholy: my heart rushed with ardor into a thousand innocent felicities; melting to tenderness, I sighed and wept like a child. How often, stopping to weep more at my ease, and seated on a large stone, did I amuse myself with seeing my tears drop into the water!

On my arrival at Vévey I lodged at the Clef, and during the two days I remained there, without any acquaintance, conceived a love for that town, which has followed me through all my travels, and was finally the cause that I placed in this spot the residence of the hero and heroines of my romance. I would say to anyone who has taste and feeling, Go to Vévey, visit the surrounding country, examine the prospects, go on the lake, and then say whether nature has not designed this

country for a Julie, a Claire, and a Saint-Preux; but do not seek them there. I now return to my story.

Being a Catholic, and avowing myself to be one, I followed without mystery or scruple the religion I had embraced. On Sunday, if the weather was fine, I went to hear mass at Assens, a place two leagues distant from Lausanne, and generally in company with other Catholics, particularly a Parisian embroiderer, whose name I have forgotten. Not such a Parisian as myself, but a Parisian of Paris, an arch-Parisian from his Maker, yet good-natured as a Champenois. He loved his country so well that he would not doubt my being his countryman, for fear he should not have so much occasion to speak of it. The Lieutenant-baillival, Monsieur de Crouzas, had a gardener, who was likewise from Paris, but not so complaisant; he thought the glory of his country concerned when anyone claimed that honor who was not really entitled to it. He put questions to me, therefore, with an air and tone as if certain to detect me in a falsehood, and once, smiling malignantly, asked me what was remarkable in the Marché-Neuf. It may be supposed I evaded the question; but I have since passed twenty years at Paris, and certainly should know that city; yet, were the same question repeated at this day, I should be equally embarrassed to answer it, and from this embarrassment it might be concluded I had never been there; thus, even when we meet with truths, we are subject to build our opinions on false principles.

I formed no ideas, while at Lausanne, that were worth recollecting, nor can I say exactly how long I remained there; I only know that, not finding sufficient to subsist on, I went from thence to Neuchâtel, where I passed the winter. Here







Maurice Leloir inv

D Mordant sc





I succeeded better: I got some scholars, and saved enough to pay my good friend Perrotet, who had faithfully sent my baggage, though at that time I was considerably in his debt.

By continuing to teach music I insensibly gained some knowledge of it. The life I led was sufficiently agreeable, and any reasonable man might have been satisfied, but my unsettled heart demanded something more. On Sundays, or whenever I had leisure, I wandered, sighing and thoughtful, about the adjoining fields and woods, and when once out of the city, never returned before night. One day, being at Boudry, I went to dine at a cabaret, where I saw a man with a long beard, dressed in a violet-colored Greek habit, with a fur cap, and whose air and manner were rather noble. This person found some difficulty in making himself understood, speaking only an unintelligible jargon, which bore more resemblance to Italian than any other language. I understood almost all he said, and I was the only person present who could do so, for he was obliged to make his requests known to the landlord and others about him by signs. On my speaking a few words in Italian, which he perfectly understood, he got up and embraced me with rapture; a connection was soon formed, and from that moment I became his interpreter. His dinner was excellent, mine rather worse than indifferent; he gave me an invitation to dine with him, which I accepted without much ceremony. Drinking and chatting soon rendered us familiar, and by the end of the repast we had become inseparable. He informed me that he was a Greek prelate, and Archimandrite of Jerusalem; that he had undertaken to collect funds in Europe for the repairing of the Holy Sepulchre, and showed me some very fine patents from the Czarina, the Emperor,



and several other sovereigns. He was tolerably content with what he had collected hitherto, though he had experienced inconceivable difficulties in Germany; for, not understanding a word of German, Latin, or French, he had been obliged to have recourse to his Greek, Turkish, and *Lingua Franca*, which did not procure him much in the country he was traveling through; his proposal, therefore, to me was that I should accompany him in the quality of secretary and interpreter. In spite of my violet-colored coat, which accorded well enough with the proposed employment, he guessed from my ill-furnished appearance that I should easily be gained; and he was not mistaken. The bargain was soon made; I demanded nothing, and he promised liberally. Without security, without bond, without acquaintance, I gave myself up to his guidance, and next morning behold me on my way to Jerusalem.

We began our expedition rather unsuccessfully by the canton of Fribourg. Episcopal dignity would not suffer him to play the beggar, or solicit help from private individuals; but we presented his commission to the Senate, who gave him a trifling sum. From thence we went to Berne, where we lodged at the Faucon, then a good inn, and frequented by respectable company, the public table being well supplied and numerous attended. I had fared indifferently so long that I was glad to make myself amends, therefore took care to profit by the present occasion. Monseigneur l'Archimandrite was himself an excellent companion, loved good cheer, was gay, spoke well for those who understood him, and knew perfectly well how to make the most of his Greek erudition. One day, at dessert, while cracking nuts, he cut his finger pretty

deeply, and as it bled freely showed it to the company, saying with a laugh, "Mirate, signori; questo è sangue Pelasgo."

At Berne I was not useless to him, nor was my performance so bad as I had feared; I certainly spoke better and with more confidence than I could have done for myself. Matters were not conducted here with the same simplicity as at Fribourg; long and frequent conferences were necessary with the chiefs of the State, and the examination of his titles was not the work of a day; at length, everything being adjusted, he was admitted to an audience by the Senate; I entered with him as interpreter, and was ordered to speak. Nothing was further from my expectation, for it never entered my mind that, after such long and frequent conferences with the members, it was necessary to address the assembly collectively, as if nothing had been said. Judge my embarrassment!—a man so bashful, to speak, not only in public, but before the Senate of Berne! to speak impromptu, without a single moment for recollection; it was enough to annihilate me. I was not even intimidated. I described succinctly and clearly the commission of the Archimandrite; extolled the piety of those princes who had contributed, and, to heighten that of their excellencies by emulation, added that less could not be expected from their well-known munificence; then, endeavoring to prove that this good work was equally interesting to all Christians, without distinction of sect, I concluded by promising the benediction of Heaven to all those who took part in it. I will not say that my discourse was the cause of our success, but it was certainly well received; and, on our quitting, the Archimandrite was gratified by a considerable present, to which were added some very handsome compliments on the

intelligence of his secretary; these I had the agreeable office of interpreting, but could not take courage to render literally. This was the only time in my life that I spoke in public, and before a sovereign; and the only time, perhaps, that I spoke boldly and well. What difference in the disposition of the same person! Three years ago, having been to see my old friend, Monsieur Roguin, at Yverdon, I received a deputation to thank me for some books I had presented to the library of that city. The Swiss are great speakers; these gentlemen, accordingly, made me a long harangue, which I thought myself obliged to answer, but so embarrassed myself in the attempt that my head became confused, I stopped short, and was laughed at. Though naturally timid, I have sometimes acted with confidence in my youth, but never in my advanced age: the more I have seen of the world, the less I have been able to adopt its manners.

On leaving Berne we went to Soleure; the Archimandrite designing to re-enter Germany, and return through Hungary or Poland to his own country. This would have been a prodigious tour; but as the contents of his purse rather increased than diminished during his journey, he was in no haste to return. For me, who was almost as much pleased on horse-back as on foot, I would have desired no better fate than to travel thus during my whole life; but it was preordained that my journey should be shorter.

The first thing we did after our arrival at Soleure was to pay our respects to the French Ambassador there. Unfortunately for my Bishop, this chanced to be the Marquis de Bonac, who had been Ambassador at the Porte, and consequently was acquainted with every particular relative to the

Holy Sepulchre. The Archimandrite had an audience that lasted about a quarter of an hour, to which I was not admitted, as the Ambassador understood the *Lingua Franca*, and spoke Italian at least as well as myself. On my Greek's departure I prepared to follow him, but was detained. It was now my turn. Having called myself a Parisian, as such I was under the jurisdiction of his excellency; he therefore asked me who I was, exhorting me to tell the truth. This I promised to do, but entreated a private audience, which was immediately granted. The Ambassador took me to his closet, and shut the door; there, throwing myself at his feet, I kept my word; nor should I have said less had I promised nothing, for a continual wish to unbosom myself puts my heart perpetually upon my lips. After having disclosed myself without reserve to the musician Lutold, I was not disposed to act the mysterious with the Marquis de Bonac, who was so well pleased with my little history, and the ingenuousness with which I had related it, that he led me by the hand to the Ambassadors, and presented me, with an abridgment of my recital. Madame de Bonac received me kindly, saying that I must not be suffered to follow that Greek monk. It was accordingly resolved that I should remain at their hotel till they saw what could be done for me. I wished to bid adieu to my poor Archimandrite, for whom I had conceived an attachment, but was not permitted. They sent him word that I was to be detained there, and in a quarter of an hour after I saw my little bundle arrive. Monsieur de La Martinière, secretary to the embassy, had in a manner the care of me. While following him to the chamber assigned to my use, he said, "This apartment was occupied under the Comte du Luc by



a celebrated man of the same name as yourself; it is for you to succeed him in every respect, and cause it to be said hereafter, 'Rousseau the First, Rousseau the Second.' " This similarity, which I did not then expect, would have been less flattering to my wishes could I have foreseen at what price I should one day purchase the distinction.

What Monsieur de La Martinière had said excited my curiosity; I read the works of the person whose chamber I occupied, and on the strength of the compliment that had been paid me—imagining I had a taste for poetry—made my first essay in a cantata in praise of Madame de Bonac. This inclination was not permanent, though from time to time I have composed indifferent verses. I think it is a good exercise to teach elegant turns of expression, and to improve a prose style, but could never find attractions enough in French poetry to give myself wholly to it.

Monsieur de La Martinière wished to see my style, and asked me to write the detail I had before made to the Ambassador; accordingly I wrote him a long letter, which I have since been informed was preserved by Monsieur de Marianne, who had been long attached to the Marquis de Bonac, and has since succeeded Monsieur de La Martinière as secretary to the embassy of Monsieur de Courteilles. I have begged Monsieur de Malesherbes to endeavor to procure me a copy of this letter. If I get it, by him or others, it will be found in the collection which I intend shall accompany my Confessions.

The experience I began to acquire tended to moderate my romantic projects; for example, not only did I not fall in love with Madame de Bonac, but also felt I did not stand

much chance of succeeding in the service of her husband. Monsieur de La Martinière in office, and Monsieur de Marianne in expectancy, my utmost hopes could only aspire to the office of under-secretary, which did not infinitely tempt me. This was the reason that, when consulted on the situation I should like to be placed in, I expressed a great desire to go to Paris. The Ambassador readily gave in to the idea, which at least tended to disembarass him of me. Monsieur de Merveilleux, interpreting secretary to the embassy, said that his friend Monsieur Godard, a Swiss colonel in the service of France, wanted a person to be with his nephew, who had entered the service very young, and he supposed that I would suit him. On this idea, so lightly formed, my departure was determined; and I, who saw a journey to perform, with Paris at the end of it, was enraptured at the project. They gave me several letters, a hundred francs to defray the expenses of my journey, accompanied with some good advice, and I started.

I was a fortnight making the journey, which I may reckon among the happiest days of my life. I was young, in perfect health, with plenty of money, and the most brilliant hopes; added to this, I was on foot, and alone. It would appear strange that I should mention the latter circumstance as advantageous, if my peculiarity of temper were not already familiar to the reader. I was continually occupied with pleasing chimeras, and never did the warmth of my imagination produce more magnificent ones. When offered an empty place in a carriage, or any person accosted me on the road, how vexed was I to see that fortune overthrown whose edifice I had erected while walking! For once, my ideas were all—

martial: I was going to live with a military man; nay, to become one, for it was concluded I should begin with being a cadet. I already fancied myself in regimentals, with a fine white plume, and my heart was inflamed by this noble idea. I had some smattering of geometry and fortification; my uncle was an engineer; I was, in a manner, a soldier by inheritance. My short sight, indeed, presented some little obstacle, but did not by any means discourage me, as I reckoned to supply that defect by coolness and intrepidity. I had read, too, that Marshal Schomberg was remarkably short-sighted, and why might not Marshal Rousseau be the same? My imagination was so warmed by these follies that it presented nothing but troops, ramparts, gabions, batteries, and myself in the midst of fire and smoke, an eye-glass in hand, tranquilly giving orders. Notwithstanding, when the country presented a delightful prospect, when I saw groves and rivulets, the pleasing sight made me sigh with regret, and feel, in the midst of all this glory, that my heart was not formed for such disorder and strife; and soon, without knowing how, I found myself among my dear sheepfolds, renouncing for ever the labors of Mars.

How much did the first sight of Paris disappoint the idea I had formed of it! The exterior decorations I had seen at Turin, the beauty of the streets, the symmetry and regularity of the houses, had led me to expect in Paris something more. I had figured to myself a splendid city, beautiful as large, of the most commanding aspect, whose streets were ranges of magnificent palaces, composed of marble and gold. On entering the Faubourg Saint-Marceau I saw nothing but dirty, stinking streets, filthy black houses, an air of slovenliness

and poverty, beggars, carters, and botchers, criers of *tisane* and old hats. This struck me so forcibly that all I have since seen of real magnificence in Paris could never erase this first impression, which has ever given me a secret disgust to residing in that capital; and I may say, the whole time I remained there afterwards was employed in seeking resources which might enable me to live at a distance from it. This is the consequence of a too lively imagination, which exaggerates even beyond the voice of fame, and ever expects more than is told. I had heard Paris so flatteringly described that I pictured it like the ancient Babylon, which perhaps had I seen I might have found equally below the image I had formed in my mind. The same thing happened at the Opera House, to which I hastened the day after my arrival. I was sensible of the same deficiency at Versailles, and some time after on viewing the sea; and the same consequence will always happen to me in viewing objects which I have heard highly extolled; for it is impossible for man, and difficult for nature herself, to surpass the wealth of my imagination.

By the reception I met with from all those to whom my letters were addressed, I thought my fortune was certainly made. The person who received me the least kindly was Monsieur de Surbeck, to whom I had the warmest recommendation. He had retired from the service, and lived philosophically at Bagneux, where I waited on him several times without his offering me even a glass of water. I was better received by Madame de Merveilleux, sister-in-law to the interpreter, and by his nephew, who was an officer in the Guards. The mother and son not only received me kindly, but offered me the use of their table, which favor I frequently



accepted during my stay at Paris. Madame de Merveilleux appeared to have been handsome; her hair was of a fine black, which, according to the old mode, she wore curled on the temples. She still retained—what do not perish with a set of features—the beauties of an amiable mind. She appeared satisfied with mine, and did all she could to render me service; but no one seconded her endeavors, and I was presently undeceived in the great interest they had seemed to take in my affairs. I must, however, do the French nation the justice to say that they do not exhaust themselves in protestations, as some have represented, and those that they make are usually sincere; but they have a manner of appearing interested in your affairs, which is more deceiving than words. The gross compliments of the Swiss can only impose upon fools; the manners of the French are more seducing, for the reason that they are more simple. You are persuaded they do not express all they mean to do for you, in order that you may be all the more agreeably surprised. I will say more: they are not false in their demonstrations, being naturally zealous to oblige, humane, benevolent, and even, whatever may be said to the contrary, more sincere than any other nation; but they are too flighty. They feel truly the sentiment they profess for you, but that sentiment flies off as quickly as it came. In speaking to you, their whole attention is fixed on you alone; when absent, you are forgotten. Nothing is permanent in their hearts; all is the work of the moment.

Thus I was greatly flattered, but received little service. Colonel Godard, for whose nephew I was recommended, proved to be an avaricious old wretch, who, on seeing my distress.

though he was immensely rich, wished to have my services for nothing, meaning to place me with his nephew rather as a valet without wages than a tutor. He represented that as I was to be continually engaged with him I should be excused from duty, and might live on my cadet's allowance—that is to say, on the pay of a soldier; hardly would he consent to give me a uniform, thinking the clothing of the army might serve. Madame de Merveilleux, provoked at his proposals, persuaded me not to accept them; her son was of the same opinion; something else was to be thought on, but no situation was procured. Meantime I began to be straitened; for the hundred francs with which I had commenced my journey could not last much longer. Happily, I received a small remittance from the Ambassador, which was very serviceable, nor do I think he would have abandoned me had I possessed more patience; but languishing, waiting, soliciting, are to me impossible. I was disheartened, I ceased to make calls, and all was over. I had not forgotten my poor Mamma, but how was I to find her? Where should I seek her? Madame de Merveilleux, who knew my story, assisted me in the search, but for a long time unavailingly; at length she informed me that Madame de Warens had set out on her return above two months before, but it was not known whether for Savoy or Turin, and that some conjectured she had gone to Switzerland. Nothing further was necessary to fix my determination to follow her, certain that, wherever she might be, I stood more chance of finding her in the country than at Paris.

Before my departure I exercised my new poetical talent in an epistle to Colonel Godard, whom I ridiculed to the utmost of my abilities. I showed this scribble to Madame de

Merveilleux, who, instead of discouraging me, as she ought to have done, laughed heartily at my sarcasms, as well as her son, who, I believe, did not like Monsieur Godard; indeed, it must be confessed he was not a lovable man. I was tempted to send him my versés, and they encouraged me in it; accordingly I made them up in a parcel directed to him, and there being no local post then at Paris, I put it in my pocket, and sent it to him from Auxerre, as I passed through that place. I laugh even yet at the grimaces he must have made on reading this panegyric, where he was certainly drawn to the life. It began thus:

Tu croyais, vieux penard, qu'une folle manie  
D'élever ton neveu m'inspirerait l'envie.

This little piece, which, it is true, was but indifferently written, did not want for salt, and announced a turn for satire; it is, notwithstanding, the only satirical writing that ever came from my pen. I have too little hatred in my heart to take advantage of such a talent; but I believe it may be judged from some polemical pieces, which from time to time I have put forth in my own defence, that, had I been of a vindictive disposition, my adversaries would rarely have had the laughter on their side.

What I most regret is not having kept a journal of my travels, being conscious that a number of interesting details have slipped my memory; for never did I exist so completely, never live so thoroughly, never was so much myself, if I may so speak, as in those journeys made alone and on foot. Walking animates and enlivens my spirits; I can hardly think when in a state of inactivity; my body must be exercised to make my judgment active. The view of a fine country, a

succession of agreeable prospects, a free air, a good appetite, and the health I gain by walking; the freedom of inns, and the distance from everything that can make me recollect the dependence of my situation, conspire to free my soul, and give boldness to my thoughts, throwing me, in a manner, into the immensity of beings, where I combine, choose, and appropriate them to my fancy, without constraint or fear. I dispose of all nature as I please; my heart, wandering from object to object, approximates and unites with those that please it, is surrounded by charming images, and becomes intoxicated with delicious sensations. If, attempting to render these permanent, I amuse myself in forming a mental picture, what boldness of outline, what glow of coloring, what energy of expression, do I give them! It has been said that all these are to be found in my works, though written in the decline of life. Oh! had those of my early youth been seen, those made during my travels, composed, but never written! Why did I not write them? will be asked. And why should I have written them? I may answer. Why deprive myself of the actual charm of my enjoyments to tell others what I enjoyed? What to me were readers, the public, or all the world, while I was mounting the empyrean? Besides, did I carry pens, paper, and ink with me? Had I made such provision, not a thought would have occurred worth preserving. I do not foresee when I shall have ideas; they come when they please, and not when I call for them; either they avoid me altogether, or, rushing in crowds, overwhelm me with their force and number. Ten volumes a day would not have sufficed; how then should I find time to write them? In stopping, I thought of nothing but a hearty dinner; on departing,



of nothing but a charming walk ; I felt that a new paradise awaited me at the door, and to attain it was my sole object.

Never did I experience this so feelingly as in the return journey I am now describing. In coming to Paris, I had confined myself to ideas concerning the situation I expected to occupy there. I had rushed into the career I was about to run, and had made a pretty glorious progress, but it was not that that my heart adhered to. Some real beings obscured my imagined ones. Colonel Godard and his nephew could not keep pace with a hero of my disposition. Thank Heaven, I was now delivered from all these obstacles, and could enter at pleasure into the wilderness of chimeras, for that alone remained before me, and I wandered in it so completely that I several times lost my way ; but this was no misfortune. I would not have shortened it ; for, feeling with regret, as I approached Lyons, that I must again return to the material world, I should have been glad never to have arrived there.

One day, among others, having purposely gone out of my way to take a nearer view of a spot that appeared delightful, I was so charmed with it, and wandered round it so often, that at length I completely lost myself, and after several hours' useless walking, weary, fainting with hunger and thirst, I entered a peasant's hut, which had not indeed a promising appearance, but was the only one I could discover near me. I thought it was here as at Geneva or in Switzerland, where the inhabitants, living at ease, have it in their power to exercise hospitality. I entreated the countryman to give me some dinner, offering to pay for it. He presented me with some skimmed milk and coarse barley bread, saying it was all he had. I drank the milk with pleasure, and ate the bread, chaff

and all; but it was not very restorative to a man sinking with fatigue. The countryman, who watched me narrowly, judged the truth of my story by my appetite. Presently after—having said that he plainly saw I was an honest, good-natured young man, and did not come to betray him—he opened a little trap-door by the side of his kitchen, went down, and returned a moment after with a good brown loaf of pure wheat, the remains of a good but rather highly flavored ham, and a bottle of wine, the sight of which rejoiced my heart more than all the rest. He then prepared a good thick omelet, and I made such a dinner as none but a walking traveler ever enjoyed. When I again offered to pay, his inquietude and fears returned. He not only would have no money, but refused it with the most evident emotion; and what made this scene more amusing, I could not imagine the motive of his fear. At length he pronounced tremblingly those terrible words, “commissioners” and “cellar-rats,” which he explained by giving me to understand that he concealed his wine because of the excise, and his bread on account of the tax imposed on it; adding he should be an undone man if it were suspected he was not almost perishing with want. What he said to me on this subject, of which I had not the smallest idea, made an impression on my mind that can never be effaced, sowing seeds of that inextinguishable hatred which has since grown up in my heart against the vexations these unhappy people suffer, and against their oppressors. This man, though in easy circumstances, dared not eat the bread gained by the sweat of his brow, and could only escape ruin by exhibiting an outward appearance of misery! I left his cottage with as much indignation as concern, deploring the fate of those beautiful coun-

tries, where Nature has been prodigal of her gifts only that they may become the prey of barbarous exactors.

The incident which I have just related is the only one of which I have a distinct remembrance during this journey. I recollect, indeed, that on approaching Lyons I wished to prolong it by going to see the banks of the Lignon; for, among the romances I had read with my father, *L'Astrée* was not forgotten, and recurred more frequently to my thoughts than any other. Stopping for some refreshment, while chatting with my hostess I inquired the way to Forez, and was informed that that country was an excellent place for mechanics, as there were many forges, and much ironwork done there. This eulogium instantly calmed my romantic curiosity, for I felt no inclination to seek Dianas and Sylvanders among a generation of blacksmiths. The good woman who encouraged me with this piece of information certainly thought I was a journeyman locksmith.

I had some view in going to Lyons. On my arrival I went to Les Chasottes to see Mademoiselle du Châtelet, a friend of Madame de Warens, for whom I had brought a letter when I came there with Monsieur Le Maître, so that it was an acquaintance already formed. Mademoiselle du Châtelet informed me that her friend had indeed passed through Lyons, but could not tell whether she had gone on to Piedmont, being uncertain at her departure whether it would not be necessary to stop in Savoy; but, if I chose, she would immediately write for information, and thought my best plan would be to remain at Lyons till she received it. I accepted this offer, but did not tell Mademoiselle du Châtelet how much I was pressed for an answer, and that my exhausted purse would

not permit me to wait long. It was not an appearance of coolness that withheld me; on the contrary, I was very kindly received, treated on the footing of equality, and this took from me the resolution of explaining my circumstances, for I could not bear to descend from a companion to a miserable beggar.

I seem to have retained a very complete remembrance of the successive events contained in this book, yet I think I remember, about the same period, another journey to Lyons, which I cannot place in its due order, where I found myself much straitened. A little anecdote, that presents some difficulty in the relation, will not suffer me to forget it. One evening I sat at Bellecour after a slight supper, meditating on my difficulties and prospects, when a man wearing a cotton bonnet seated himself by my side. He seemed to be one of those silkworkers called at Lyons *taffetatiers*. He spoke to me; I replied in a friendly way. We had not been conversing for more than quarter of an hour, when, with perfect coolness of voice and manner, he proposed that we should take some amusement together. I was so scared by the impudence of his succeeding remarks that, without replying, I hastily arose and ran away at full speed, thinking the wretch must be close at my heels. So strongly was I agitated that, instead of proceeding to my lodging by the Rue Saint-Dominique, I ran along the quay, and did not stop till past the wooden bridge, trembling all the while like a criminal. I was subject to the same vice; the recollection of this affair cured me of it for a long period.

In my present journey I met with a somewhat similar adventure, which, however, was attended with greater danger.



Conscious that my resources were fast diminishing, I tried to make the small remainder go as far as possible. I ate fewer meals at the inn, and soon quite ceased to frequent the table; and, instead of spending there some five-and-twenty sous, went to a tavern, where I could satisfy my appetite as fully for five or six. Ceasing to take my food at the inn, I knew not how, with a good grace, to go thither to sleep—not that I owed my hostess much, but was ashamed, as a profitless guest, to occupy a room. The weather was fine; one very warm evening I resolved to spend the night in the public square, and had already taken my place upon a bench, when an abbé, who in passing had noticed me, approached and asked whether I was homeless. I told him how matters stood with me, and he seemed affected. He sat down beside me, and we conversed. He spoke agreeably; from all that he said I conceived a wonderfully good opinion of him. When he saw me disposed in his favor, he told me that his lodging was not very roomy; that he had but a single chamber, but that he really could not suffer me to sleep where I was; that it was too late to seek another bed, and that he would offer me half of his own for the night. I accepted his offer, thinking that I had fallen in with one who might prove a useful friend. We soon arrived, and he struck a light. His chamber, though small, appeared to be very neat, and he played the host politely. We each ate a couple of brandied cherries, which he took from a glass jar, and retired to rest.

This man's tastes resembled those of my Jew at the asylum for converts, but his manner was less brutal. Gently, and with as much firmness as I could command, I spoke to him in a fashion that brought him to a better state of mind,

and the night passed tranquilly. Indeed, he made many excellent and sensible observations, and did not lack merit of a sort, though assuredly he was a very vile fellow.

In the morning, Monsieur l'Abbé, who would fain put a fair face on the matter, talked of breakfast, and asked one of the landlady's daughters, a pretty girl, to serve it. She told him that she could not spare time to do so. He then made the same request to her sister, who did not deign to reply. Still we waited—no appearance of breakfast. At length we went into their apartment, where Monsieur l'Abbé had a very ill welcome, my own reception being even less satisfactory. The elder girl, in turning round, planted her heel on my foot, just where a grievous corn had obliged me to cut the shoe-leather; the other snatched away a chair on which I was about to sit; their mother, in flinging water out of the window, splashed my face; wherever I took up my position I was bidden to move that they might search for some article. I had never in my life experienced such treatment. In their looks were mingled anger, insult, and covert contempt, which at the time I was too stupid to comprehend. Bewildered, astonished, almost believing them to be mad, a real terror came over me, when the abbé, who feigned neither to see nor to hear, and judged that no breakfast was to be hoped for, determined to leave, and I hastened after him, glad to escape from the three furies. As we went along he proposed that we should breakfast at a café. Hungry though I was, I refused his offer, which, indeed, he did not make in a very pressing fashion, and we parted at the third or fourth street-corner—I delighted to be out of sight of that accursed house, and all that pertained to it; he well pleased, I imagine, that

he had led me so far from it that I could not easily find it again. Since neither at Paris nor in any other town have I ever encountered a parallel to these two adventures, there was left in my mind a most unfavorable impression of the natives of Lyons—a city which I regard as more hideously corrupt than any other in Europe.

The recollection of the extremities to which I was reduced does not contribute to recall the idea agreeably. Had I been like many others, had I possessed the talent of borrowing and running in debt at every cabaret, I might have fared better; but in that my incapacity equaled my repugnance, and, to demonstrate the prevalence of both, it will be sufficient to say that, though I have passed almost my whole life in indifferent circumstances, and frequently on the point of wanting bread, I was never once asked for money by a creditor without having it in my power to pay it instantly. I could never bear to contract clamorous debts, and have ever preferred suffering to owing.

Being reduced to pass my nights in the streets may certainly be called suffering, and this was several times the case at Lyons, having preferred to buy bread with the few pence I had remaining to bestowing them on lodgings, as I was convinced there was less danger of dying for want of sleep than of hunger. What is astonishing, while in this unhappy situation, I took no care for the future, was neither uneasy nor melancholy, but patiently waited an answer to Mademoiselle du Châtelet's letter, and, lying in the open air, stretched on the earth, or on a bench, slept as soundly as if reposing on a bed of roses. I remember, particularly, to have passed a most delightful night outside the city, on a road which had

the Rhône, or Saône<sup>4</sup>—I cannot recollect which—on the one side, and a range of terraced gardens on the other. It had been a very hot day, the evening was delightful, the dew moistened the withering grass, no wind was stirring, the air was fresh without chilliness, the setting sun had tinged the clouds with a beautiful crimson, which was again reflected by the water, and the trees that bordered the terrace were filled with nightingales, who were continually answering each other's songs. I walked along in a kind of ecstasy, giving up my heart and senses to the enjoyment of so many delights, and sighing only from a regret of enjoying them alone. Absorbed in this pleasing reverie, I lengthened my walk till it grew very late, without perceiving that I was tired; at length, however, I discovered it, and threw myself on the step of a kind of niche, or false door, in a terrace wall. How charming was the couch! The trees formed a stately canopy, a nightingale sat directly over me, and with his soft notes lulled me to rest. How sweet my repose—my awaking more so! It was broad day; on opening my eyes I saw the water, the verdure, an admirable landscape. I arose, shook off the remains of drowsiness, and, finding I was hungry, gaily retook the way to the city, resolving to spend the two pieces of six blancs I had yet remaining in a good breakfast. I found myself so cheerful that I went all the way singing. I even remember that I sang a cantata of Batistin's called "*Les Bains de Thomery*," which I knew by heart. May a blessing light on the good Batistin and his good cantata, which procured me a better breakfast than I had expected, and a still better dinner, which I did not expect at all! In the midst of my singing I heard some one behind me, and, turning round, perceived an Anto-



nine, who followed after and seemed to listen with pleasure to my song. At length, accosting me, he asked whether I understood music. I answered, "A little," but in a manner to have it understood that I knew a great deal, and, as he continued questioning me, I related a part of my story. He asked me if I had ever copied music. I replied, "Often," which was true, for I had learned most by copying. "Well," continued he, "come with me, I can employ you for a few days, during which time you shall want for nothing, provided you consent not to quit my room." I acquiesced very willingly, and followed him.

This Antonine was called Monsieur Rolichon; he loved music, understood it, and sang in some little concerts with his friends. Thus far all was innocent and right, but apparently this taste had become a furore, part of which he was obliged to conceal. He conducted me into a small chamber, where I found a great quantity of music; he gave me some to copy, particularly the cantata he had heard me singing, and which he was shortly to sing himself. I remained here three or four days, copying all the time I did not eat, for never in my life was I so hungry, or better fed. He brought my provisions himself from the kitchen, and it appeared that these people lived well—at least, if every one fared as I did. In my life I never took such pleasure in eating, and it must be owned this good cheer came very opportunely, for my purse was almost exhausted. I worked nearly as heartily as I ate, which is saying a great deal; 'tis true I was not as correct as diligent, for some days after, meeting Monsieur Rolichon in the street, he informed me there were so many omissions, repetitions, and transpositions in the parts I had copied

that they could not be performed. It must be owned that, in choosing subsequently the profession of music, I hit on that which I was least calculated for ; yet my voice was good, and I copied neatly ; but the fatigue of long work bewilders me so much that I spend more time in altering and scratching out than in pricking down, and, if I do not employ the strictest attention in comparing the several parts, they are sure to fail in the execution. Thus, through endeavoring to do well, my performance was very faulty ; for, aiming at expedition, I did all amiss. This did not prevent Monsieur Rolichon from treating me well to the last, and giving me an écu at my departure, which I certainly did not deserve, and which completely set me up, for a few days after I received news from Mamma, who was at Chambéri, with money to defray my expenses of the journey to her, which I performed with rapture. Since then my finances have frequently been very low, but never at such an ebb as to reduce me to fasting, and I note this period with a heart fully alive to the bounty of Providence, as the last in my life in which I sustained poverty and hunger.

I remained at Lyons seven or eight days longer, to wait for some little commissions with which Mamma had charged Mademoiselle du Châtelet, whom, during this interval, I visited more assiduously than before, having the pleasure of talking with her of her friend, and being no longer disturbed by the cruel thought of my situation, or endeavors to conceal it. Mademoiselle du Châtelet was neither young nor handsome, but did not want for elegance ; she was easy and obliging, while her understanding lent a grace to her familiarity. She had a taste for that kind of moral observation which leads to the knowledge of mankind, and from her originated the taste

for that study in myself. She was fond of Le Sage's novels, particularly *Gil Blas*, which she lent me, and recommended to my perusal. I read it with pleasure, but my judgment was not yet ripe enough for that species of reading. I liked romances which dealt with high-flown sentiments. Thus did I pass my time in visiting Mademoiselle du Châtelet, with as much profit as pleasure. It is certain that the interesting and sensible conversation of a meritorious woman is more proper to form the understanding of a young man than all the pedantic philosophy of books. I became acquainted at Les Chasottes with some other boarders and their friends, and, among the rest, with a young person of fourteen, called Mademoiselle Serre, whom I did not much notice at that time, though I was deeply in love with her eight or nine years afterwards, and with great reason, for she was a charming girl.

Fully occupied with the idea of seeing Mamma, I gave some respite to my chimeras, for, finding happiness in real objects, I was the less inclined to seek it in visions. I had not only found her, but also by her means, and near her, an agreeable situation, for she sent me word that she had procured one that would suit me, and which would not oblige me to quit her. I exhausted all my conjectures in guessing what this occupation could be, but I must have possessed the art of divination to have hit on the truth. I had money sufficient to make my journey agreeable. Mademoiselle du Châtelet would have persuaded me to hire a horse, but this I could not consent to, and I was certainly right; by so doing I should have lost the pleasure of the last pedestrian expedition I ever made; for I cannot give that name to those excursions I have frequently taken about my own neighborhood when living at Motiers.

It is very singular that my imagination never rises so high as when my situation is least agreeable or cheerful. When everything smiles around me, then I am least amused; my erratic brain cannot confine itself to realities, cannot embellish, but must create. Real objects but strike me as they really are; my imagination can only adorn ideal ones. If I would paint the spring, it must be in winter; if describe a beautiful landscape, it must be while surrounded with walls; and I have said a hundred times that were I confined to the Bastille, I could draw the picture of liberty. On my departure from Lyons, I saw nothing but an agreeable future; the content I now with reason enjoyed was as great as my discontent had been at leaving Paris, notwithstanding I had not during this journey any of those delightful reveries I then enjoyed. My mind was serene, and that was all. I was drawing near the excellent friend I was again to see, my heart overflowing with tenderness, enjoying in advance, but without intoxication, the pleasure of living near her: I had always expected this, and it was as if nothing new had happened. I was anxious about the nature of my future employment, as if that alone had been material. My ideas were calm and peaceable, not ravishing and celestial; every object struck my sight in its natural form; I observed the surrounding landscape, marked the trees, the houses, the rivulets, deliberated on the cross-roads, was fearful of losing myself, yet did not do so. In a word, I was no longer in the empyrean, but precisely where I found myself, or sometimes, perhaps, at the end of my journey—never further.

I am, in recounting my travels, as I was in making them, loath to arrive at the conclusion. My heart beat with joy as



I approached my dear Mamma, but I went no faster on that account. I love to walk at my ease, and stop at leisure; a strolling life is necessary to me. Traveling on foot, in a fine country, with fine weather, with no need for haste, and with the expectation of an agreeable conclusion to my journey, is the manner of living of all others most suited to my taste. It is already understood what I mean by a fine country; never could a flat one, though ever so beautiful, appear such in my eyes. I must have torrents, fir-trees, black woods, mountains to climb or descend, and rugged roads with precipices on either side to alarm me. I experienced this pleasure in all its charm as I approached Chambéri, not far from a mountain which is called Pas de l'Echelle. Beneath the main road, which is hewn through the rock, at a place known as Chailles, a small river runs and rushes into fearful chasms, which it appears to have been millions of ages in hollowing out. The road has been hedged by a parapet to prevent accidents, which enabled me to contemplate the whole descent, and become dizzy at pleasure; for what is singularly amusing in my taste for these steep rocks is that they cause a swimming in my head, for which I have a fondness, provided I am in safety. Leaning, therefore, over the parapet, I remained whole hours, catching, from time to time, a glance of the froth and blue water, whose rushing caught my ear, mingled with the cries of ravens and other birds of prey that flew from rock to rock, and bush to bush, at six hundred feet below me. In places where the slope was tolerably regular, and clear enough from bushes to let stones roll freely, I went a considerable way to gather some so large that I could but just carry them, which I piled on the parapet, and then threw down one after the other, being

transported at seeing them roll, rebound, and fly into a thousand pieces, before they reached the bottom of the precipice.

Near Chambéri I enjoyed an equally pleasing spectacle, though of a different kind, the road passing near the foot of the most charming cascade I ever saw. The water, which is very rapid, shoots from the top of an excessively steep mountain, falling at such a distance from its base that it is possible to walk between the cascade and the rock without any inconvenience; but if not particularly careful it is easy to be deceived, as I was, for the water, falling from such an immense height, separates and descends in a rain as fine as dust, and, on approaching too near this cloud, without perceiving it, you may be wet through in an instant.

At length I arrive—I behold her. She was not alone, Monsieur l'Intendant-Général was with her. Without speaking a word to me, she caught my hand, and, presenting me to him with that natural grace which charmed all hearts, said, "This, sir, is the poor young man I mentioned; deign to protect him as long as he deserves it, and I shall feel no concern for the remainder of his life." Then added, addressing herself to me, "Child, you now belong to the King; thank Monsieur l'Intendant, who supplies you with the means of existence." I stared without answering, without knowing what to think of all this; rising ambition almost turned my head; I was already prepared to act the Intendant myself. My fortune, however, was not so brilliant as it appeared at the first blush, but it was sufficient to maintain me, which, as I was situated, was a capital acquisition. I shall now explain the nature of my employment.

King Victor Amadeus, judging by the event of the preceding wars, and the situation of the ancient patrimony of his

fathers, that he should not long be able to maintain it, wished to drain it beforehand. Having resolved, therefore, to tax the nobility, he had ordered a general survey of the whole country, in order that the rate might be more equally assessed. This scheme, which was begun under the father, was completed by the son; two or three hundred men, part surveyors, who were called geometricians, and part writers, who were called secretaries, were employed in this work; among those of the latter description Mamma had got me appointed. This post, without being very lucrative, furnished the means of living comfortably in that country; the misfortune was, this employment could not be of any great duration, but it put me in train to seek for something better, as by this means she hoped to insure the particular protection of the Intendant, who might find me some more settled occupation when this was concluded.

I entered on my new employment a few days after my arrival, and, as there was no great difficulty in the business, soon mastered it; thus, after four or five years of unsettled life, folly, and suffering, since my departure from Geneva, I began, for the first time, to gain my bread with credit.

These long details of my early youth must have appeared puerile, and I am sorry for it: though born a man, in a variety of instances I was long a child, and am so yet in many particulars. I did not promise the public a great personage. I promised to describe myself as I am; and, to know me in my advanced age, it is necessary to know what I was in my youth. As, in general, objects that are present make less impression on me than the bare remembrance of them, my ideas being all from recollection, the first traits which were engraven on my

mind have distinctly remained: those which have since been imprinted there have rather combined with the former than effaced them. There is a certain yet varied succession of affections and ideas, which continue to modify those that follow them, and this progression must be known, in order to judge rightly of those they have influenced. I have studied to develop the first causes, the better to show the concatenation of effects. I would desire by some means to render my soul transparent to the eyes of the reader, and for this purpose endeavor to show it in every possible point of view, to give him every insight, and act in such a manner that not a motion should escape him, as by this means he may form a judgment of the principles that produce them.

Were I to take upon myself to decide, and say to the reader, "Such is my character," he might think that, if I did not endeavor to deceive him, I at least deceived myself; but in recounting simply all that has happened to me, all my actions, thoughts, and feelings, I cannot lead him into an error, unless I do it wilfully, which by this means I could not easily effect, since it is his province to compare the elements, and judge of the being they compose: thus the result must be his work, and if he is then deceived, the error will be his own. It is not sufficient for this purpose that my recitals should be merely faithful, they must also be exact; it is not for me to judge of the importance of facts, I ought to declare them simply as they are, and leave the estimate that is to be formed of them to him. I have adhered to this principle hitherto, with the most scrupulous exactitude, and shall not depart from it in the continuation; but the impressions of age are always less vivid than those of youth. I began by delineating





BOOK FIVE





# THE CONFESSIONS OF JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU

BOOK V—FIRST PERIOD

[1732-1736]

*Am. Dec. 18, 1922, 8 P.M. [unclear]*



T was, I believe, in 1732 that I arrived at Chambéri, as already related, and began my employment of registering land for the King. I was almost twenty-one, my mind well enough formed for my age, with respect to sense, but deficient in point of judgment, and needing every instruction from those into whose hands I fell, to make me conduct myself with propriety; for a few years'



experience had not been able to cure me radically of my romantic ideas ; and, notwithstanding the ills I had sustained, I knew as little of the world, or mankind, as if I had never purchased instruction.

I slept at home—that is, at Mamma's house—but it was not at Annecy : here were no gardens, no brook, no landscape ; the house was dark and dismal, and my apartment the most gloomy of the whole. The prospect a dead wall, an alley instead of a street, confined air, bad light, small rooms, iron bars, rats, and a rotten floor—an assemblage of circumstances that do not constitute a very agreeable habitation ; but I was in her house, incessantly near her, at my desk or in her chamber, so that I could not perceive the gloominess of my own, or have time to think of it. It may appear odd that she should reside at Chambéri on purpose to live in this disagreeable house ; but it was a trait of contrivance which I ought not to pass over in silence. She had no inclination for a journey to Turin, fearing that, after the recent revolutions, and the agitation in which the Court yet was, she should not be very favorably received there ; but her affairs seemed to demand her presence, as she feared being forgotten or ill-treated, particularly as the Comte de Saint-Laurent, Intendant-Général of the Finances, was not in her interest. He had an old house at Chambéri, ill-built, and standing in so disagreeable a situation that it was always untenanted ; she hired and settled in this house—a plan that succeeded much better than a journey to Turin would have done, for her pension was not suppressed, and the Comte de Saint-Laurent was ever after her friend.

Her household was much on the old footing ; the faithful Claude Anet still remained with her. He was, as I have

before mentioned, a peasant of Moutru, who in his childhood had gathered herbs in the Jura for the purpose of making Swiss tea: she had taken him into her service for his knowledge of drugs, finding it convenient to have an herbalist among her domestics. Passionately fond of the study of plants, he became under her guidance a real botanist, and, had he not died young, might have acquired as much fame in that science as he deserved for being an honest man. Serious even to gravity, and older than myself, he was to me a kind of tutor, commanding respect, and preserving me from a number of follies, for I dared not forget myself before him. He commanded it likewise from his mistress, who knew his understanding, uprightness, and inviolable attachment to herself, and return edit. Claude Anet was of an uncommon temper; I never encountered a similar disposition. He was slow, deliberate, and circumspect in his conduct; cold in his manner; laconic and sententious in discourse; yet of an impetuosity in his passions which, though carefully concealed, preyed upon him inwardly, and urged him to the only folly he ever committed: that folly indeed was terrible—it was poisoning himself. This tragic scene passed soon after my arrival, and opened my eyes to the intimacy that existed between Claude Anet and his mistress, for, had not the information come from her, I should never have suspected it; yet surely, if attachment, fidelity, and zeal could merit such a recompense, it was due to him, and, what further proves him worthy such a distinction, he never once abused her confidence. They seldom disputed, and their disagreements ever ended amicably. One, indeed, was not so fortunate; his mistress, in a passion, insulted him grossly, which not being able to

digest, he consulted only with despair, and, finding a bottle of laudanum at hand, drank it off; then went peaceably to bed, expecting to wake no more. Fortunately Madame de Warens herself was uneasy, agitated, wandering about the house, and, finding the empty phial, guessed the rest. Her screams, while flying to his assistance, alarmed me; she confessed all, implored my help, and was fortunate enough, after repeated efforts, to make him vomit the laudanum. Witness of this scene, I could not but wonder at my stupidity in never having suspected the connection; but Claude Anet was so discreet that a more penetrating observer might have been deceived. Their reconciliation affected me, and added respect to the esteem I had before felt for him. From this time I became, in some measure, his pupil, nor did I find myself the worse for his instruction.

I could not learn without pain that she lived in greater intimacy with another than with myself: it was a situation I had not even thought of, but—which was very natural—it hurt me to see another in possession of it. Nevertheless, instead of feeling any aversion to the person who had this advantage over me, I found the attachment I felt for her actually extend to him. I desired her happiness above all things, and, since he was necessary to her happiness, I was content that he should be happy likewise. Meantime he entered perfectly into the views of his mistress, and conceived a sincere friendship for the friend whom she had chosen, and without affecting the authority his situation might have entitled him to, he naturally possessed that which his superior judgment gave him over mine. I dared to do nothing he disapproved of, but he was sure to disapprove only of what merited disapproba-

tion: thus we lived in a union which rendered us mutually happy, and which death alone could dissolve.

One proof of the excellence of this amiable woman's character is, that all those who loved her loved each other, even jealousy and rivalry submitting to the more powerful sentiment with which she inspired them, and I never saw any of those who surrounded her entertain the least ill-will among themselves. Let the reader pause a moment on this encomium, and if he can recollect any other woman who deserves it, let him attach himself to her, if he would obtain happiness, yes, though she be the most degraded of harlots.

From my arrival at Chambéri to my departure for Paris, in 1741, there is an interval of eight or nine years, of which time I have few adventures to relate, my life being as simple as it was agreeable. This uniformity was precisely what was most wanting to complete the formation of my character, which continual troubles had prevented from acquiring any degree of stability. It was during this pleasing interval that my unconnected, unfinished education gained consistence, and made me what I have unalterably remained amid the storms that awaited me. The progress was slow, almost imperceptible, and attended by few memorable circumstances; yet it deserves to be followed and investigated.

At first, I was wholly occupied with my business, the constraint of a desk left little opportunity for other thoughts; the small portion of time I was at liberty was passed with my good Mamma, and, not having leisure to read, I felt no inclination for it; but when my business, by daily repetition, became familiar, and my mind was less occupied, study again became necessary, and, as my desires in this direction were ever irri-



tated by difficulty, might once more have become a passion, as at my master's, had not other inclinations interposed and diverted it.

Though our occupation did not demand a very profound skill in arithmetic, it sometimes required enough to puzzle me. To conquer this difficulty, I purchased books which treated of that science, and learned well, for I now studied alone. Practical arithmetic extends further than is usually supposed, if you would attain exact precision. There are operations of extreme length, in which I have sometimes seen good geometers lose themselves. Reflection, assisted by practice, gives clear ideas, and enables you to devise shorter methods; these inventions flatter our self-complacency, while their exactitude satisfies our understanding, and renders a study pleasant, which is, of itself, ungrateful. At length I became so expert as not to be puzzled by any question that was solvable by arithmetical calculation; and even now, while everything I formerly knew fades daily on my memory, this acquirement in a great measure remains, through an interval of thirty years. A few days ago, in a journey I made to Davenport, being with my host at an arithmetical lesson given to his children, I worked out with pleasure, and without errors, a most complicated sum. While setting down my figures, methought I was still at Chambéry, still in my days of happiness—how far had I to look back for them!

The coloring of our geometers' plans had given me a taste for drawing; accordingly I bought colors, and began by attempting flowers and landscapes. It was unfortunate that I had not a talent for this art, for my inclination was much disposed to it, and, while surrounded with crayons, pencils, and

colors, I could have passed whole months without wishing to leave them. This amusement engaged me so much that they were obliged to force me from it; and thus it is with every inclination I give in to, it continues to augment till at length it becomes so powerful that I lose sight of everything except the favorite amusement. Years have not been able to cure me of that fault, nay, have not even diminished it; for while I am writing this, behold me, like an old dotard, infatuated with another—to me useless—study which I do not understand, and which even those who have devoted their youthful days to its acquisition are constrained to abandon at the age when I am beginning with it.

At that time, the study I am now speaking of would have been well placed; the opportunity was good, and I had some temptation to profit by it; for the satisfaction I saw in the eyes of Anet, when he came home loaded with newly discovered plants, set me two or three times on the point of going to herborize with him, and I am almost certain that, had I gone once, I should have been caught, and perhaps at this day might have been an excellent botanist, for I know no study more congenial to my natural inclination than that of plants, the life I have led for these ten years past, in the country, being little more than a continual herborizing, though I must confess without object and without improvement; but at the time I am now speaking of I had no inclination for botany, nay, I even despised and was disgusted at the idea, considering it only as a fit study for an apothecary. Mamma was fond of it merely for this purpose, seeking none but common plants to use in her medical preparations; thus botany, chemistry, and anatomy were confounded in my idea

under the general denomination of medicine, and served to furnish me with pleasant sarcasms the whole day, which procured me, from time to time, a box on the ear. Besides this, a very contrary taste grew up with me, and by degrees absorbed all others; this was music. I was certainly born for that science, I loved it from my infancy, and it was the only inclination I have constantly adhered to; but it is astonishing that what nature seems to have designed me for should have cost me so much pains to learn, and that I should acquire it so slowly, that after a whole life spent in the practice of the art, I could never attain to sing with any certainty at sight. What rendered the study of music more agreeable to me at that time was being able to practise it with Mamma. In other respects our tastes were widely different; this was a point of coincidence of which I loved to avail myself. She had no more objection to this than myself: I knew at that time almost as much of it as she did, and after two or three efforts we could make shift to decipher an air. Sometimes, when I saw her busy at her furnace, I have said, "Mamma, here now is a charming duet, which seems made for the very purpose of spoiling your drugs." Her answer would be, "If you make me burn them, I'll make you eat them." Thus disputing, I drew her to the harpsichord; the furnace was presently forgotten, the extract of juniper or wormwood calcined—she smeared my face with the remains; it was delicious sport.

It may easily be conjectured that I had plenty of employment to fill up my leisure hours; one amusement, however, found room that was well worth all the rest.

We lived in such a confined dungeon that it was necessary sometimes to breathe the open air. Anet induced Mamma





to go into the study of medicine, and so on. I never let me be interrupted for the whole day, when I was in the house, and I was a box on the ear. Besides, a very contrary note grew up with me, and by day I absorbed all of my day was music. I was certainly not that science, I loved it from my infancy, and it was the inclination I have constantly adhered to; but it is astonishing that nature should have designed me for should I cast me so much time to learn, and that I should account to myself that after a whole day spent in the practice of it, I could never attain to sing with any certainty at sight. This rendered the study of music more agreeable to me, than that I was being able to practise it with Mamma. In fact, to speak our tastes were widely different; this was a source of contentment of which I loved to avail myself. She was more objectionable than I thought myself: I knew at that time, at least as much of it as she did, and after two or three days she would make me sing, to decipher an air. Sometimes, when I saw her busy at her furnace, I have said, "Mamma, I am singing a charming duet, which seems made for the very purpose of warming your drugs." Her answer would be, "I will burn them, I'll make you eat them." This was a great deal better to the long, richard; the furnace was producing the extract of juniper or wormwood reduced—like with the remedies; it was delicious spirit. I was so much in the subject that I had plenty of employment to fill my leisure hours: one amusement, however, was not so well worth all the rest. It was to be in a confined dungeon that it was no more than to be in the open air. And induced Mamma



Maurice Leloir inv

L. Ruet sc



to hire a garden in the suburbs, for the purpose of rearing plants; to this garden was added a summer-house, which was furnished in the customary manner; we sometimes dined, and I frequently slept there. Insensibly I became attached to this little retreat; furnished it with a few books and many prints, spending part of my time in ornamenting it, that I might agreeably surprise Mamma when she walked thither. Sometimes I quitted her, that I might enjoy the uninterrupted pleasure of thinking on her; this was a caprice I can neither excuse nor fully explain, I only know this really was the case, and therefore I avow it. I remember Madame de Luxembourg told me one day in raillery of a man who used to leave his mistress that he might enjoy the satisfaction of writing to her; I answered, I could have been this man; I might have added that sometimes I had been this very man. However, I never found it necessary to leave Mamma that I might love her the more ardently, for I was ever as perfectly free with her as when alone—an advantage I never enjoyed with any other person, man or woman, however I might be attached to them; but she was so often surrounded by company who were far from pleasing to me, that spite and weariness drove me to this asylum, where I could indulge her idea, without danger of being interrupted by impertinence.

Thus, my time being divided between business, pleasure, and instruction, my life passed in the most absolute serenity. Europe was not equally tranquil. France and the Emperor had mutually declared war, the King of Sardinia had entered into the quarrel, and a French army had filed off in Piedmont to occupy the Milanese. One column passed through Cham-béri, and, among others, the regiment of Champagne, whose



Colonel was Monsieur le Duc de la Trimouille, to whom I was presented. He promised many things, but doubtless never more thought of me. Our little garden was exactly at the end of the faubourg by which the troops entered, so that I could fully satisfy my curiosity in seeing them pass, and I became as anxious for the success of the war as if it had nearly concerned me. Till now I had never troubled myself about politics; for the first time I began reading the gazettes, but with so much partiality on the side of France, that my heart beat with rapture at her most trifling successes, and I was as much afflicted by her reverses as if I had been personally concerned. Had this folly been transient, I should not perhaps have mentioned it; but it took such root in my heart, without any reasonable cause, that when I afterwards acted the anti-despot and proud republican at Paris, I felt, in spite of myself, a secret predilection for the nation I declared servile and for that government I affected to oppose. The oddest of all was that, ashamed of an inclination so contrary to my professed maxims, I dared not own it to anyone, but rallied the French on their defeats, while my heart was more wounded than their own. I am certainly the first man who, living with a people who treated him well, and whom he almost adored, put on a borrowed air of despising them; yet my original inclination is so powerful, constant, disinterested, and invincible, that even since my quitting that kingdom, since its government, magistrates, and authors have outvied each other in rancor against me, since it has become fashionable to load me with injustice and abuse, I have not been able to get rid of this folly, but, notwithstanding their ill-treatment, love them in spite of myself.

I long sought the cause of this partiality, but was never able to find any, except in the occasion that gave it birth. A rising taste for literature attached me to French books, to their authors and their country. At the very moment that the French troops were defiling before my eyes, I was reading Brantôme's *Grands Capitaines*; my head was full of the Clissons, Bayards, Lautrecs, Colignys, Montmorencys, and Trimouilles, and I loved their descendants as the heirs of their merit and courage. In each regiment that passed by methought I saw those famous black bands who had formerly done so many noble exploits in Piedmont. In fine, I applied to these all the ideas I had gathered from books; my continuous reading, still drawn from the same nation, nourished my affection for that country, till at length it became a blind passion, which nothing could overcome. I have had occasion to remark several times in the course of my travels that this impression was not peculiar to me, but was more or less active in every country, with that part of the nation who were fond of literature, and cultivated learning; and it was this consideration that balanced the general hatred which the too confident air of the French is so apt to inspire. Their romances, more than their men, attract the women of all countries, and the celebrated dramatic pieces of France create in youth a fondness for their theatres. The reputation which the stage of Paris in particular has acquired draws to it crowds of strangers, who return enthusiasts to their own country. In short, the excellence of their literature captivates the intelligent mind, and in the unfortunate war just ended I have seen their authors and philosophers maintain the glory of France, so tarnished by her warriors.

I was, therefore, an ardent Frenchman. This rendered me a politician, and I attended in the public square, amid a throng of gapers, the arrival of the post, and, sillier than the ass in the fable, was very uneasy to know whose pack-saddle I should next have the honor to carry; for it was then supposed we should belong to France, and that Savoy would be exchanged for the Milanese. I must confess, however, that I experienced some uneasiness, for, had this war terminated unfortunately for the allies, Mamma's pension would have been in a dangerous situation. Nevertheless, I had great confidence in my good friends the French, and for once, in spite of the surprise of Monsieur de Broglie, my confidence was not ill-founded—thanks to the King of Sardinia, whom I had never thought of.

While we were fighting in Italy, they were singing in France. The operas of Rameau began to make a noise there, and once more raise the credit of his theoretic works, which, from their obscurity, were within the compass of very few understandings. By chance I heard of his *Traité de l'Harmonie*, and had no rest till I acquired it. By another chance I fell sick; my illness was inflammatory—short and violent—but my convalescence was tedious, for I was unable to go abroad for a whole month. During this time I eagerly ran over my *Traité de l'Harmonie*; but it was so long, so diffuse, and so badly disposed, that I found it would require a considerable time to unravel it; accordingly I suspended my inclination, and recreated my sight with music. The cantatas of Bernier were what I principally exercised myself with. These were never out of my mind; I learned four or five by heart, and, among the rest, *Les Amours Dormants*, which I have never







Maurice Leloir inv.

L. Ruet sc.





seen since that time, though I still retain it almost entirely, as well as *L'Amour Piqué par une Abeille*, a very pretty cantata by Clérambault, which I learned about the same time.

To complete me, there arrived a young organist from Val d'Aost, called the Abbé Palais, a good musician and an agreeable accompanist on the harpsichord. I got acquainted with him, and we soon became inseparable. He had been brought up by an Italian monk, who was a capital organist. He explained to me his principles of music, which I compared with Rameau's. My head was filled with accompaniments, concords, and harmony, but, as it was necessary to accustom the ear to all this, I proposed to Mamma having a little concert once a month, to which she consented. Behold me, then, so full of this concert, that night or day I could think of nothing else; and it actually employed a great part of my time to select the music, assemble the musicians, look to the instruments, and write out the several parts. Mamma sang; Père Caton (whom I have before mentioned, and shall have occasion to speak of again) sang likewise; a dancing-master named Roche, and his son, played on the violin; Canavas, a Piedmontese musician, who was employed in the survey, and has since married at Paris, played on the violoncello; the Abbé Palais accompanied on the harpsichord; and I had the honor to conduct the whole. It may be supposed all this was charming; I cannot say it equaled my concert at Monsieur de Treytorens', but certainly it was not far behind it.

This little concert, given by Madame de Warens, the new convert, who lived—so it was said—on the King's charity, made the whole tribe of devotees murmur, but was a very agreeable amusement to many worthy people, at the head of



whom it would not be easily surmised that I should place a monk, yet, though a monk, a man of considerable merit, and even of a very amiable disposition, whose subsequent misfortunes gave me the most lively concern, and whose idea, attached to that of my happy days, is yet dear to my memory. I speak of Père Caton, a Cordelier, who, in conjunction with the Comte d'Ortan, had caused the music of the poor "kitten" to be seized at Lyons—which action was far from being the brightest trait in his history. He was a bachelor of the Sorbonne; had lived long in Paris among the great world, and was particularly in favor with the Marquis d'Antremont, then Ambassador from Sardinia. He was tall and well made; full-faced, with expansive eyes, and black hair, which formed natural curls on each side of his forehead. His manner was at once noble, open, and modest; he presented himself with ease and good manners, having neither the hypocritical nor impudent behavior of a monk, nor the forward assurance of a man of fashion, but the manners of a well-bred person, who, without blushing for his garb, set a value on himself, and ever felt in his proper situation when in good company. Though Père Caton was not deeply studied for a doctor, he was much so for a man of the world, and, not being compelled to show his talents, he brought them forward so advantageously that they appeared to be greater than they really were. Having lived much in the world, he had attached himself rather to agreeable acquirements than to solid learning; had wit, made verses, spoke well, sang better, and aided his good voice by playing on the organ and harpsichord. So many pleasing qualities were not necessary to make his company sought after, and, accordingly, it was very much so; but this was so

far from making him neglect the duties of his function that he was chosen, in spite of his jealous competitors, *définiteur* of his province, or, according to them, one of the great "collars" of their order.

Père Caton became acquainted with Mamma at the Marquis d'Antremont's; he had heard of our concerts, wished to assist at them, and, by his company, rendered our meetings truly agreeable. We were soon attached to each other by our mutual taste for music, which in both was a most lively passion, with this difference, that he was really a musician, and myself a bungler. Sometimes, assisted by Canavas and the Abbé Palais, we had music in his apartment, or, on holidays, at his organ, and frequently dined with him; for, what was very astonishing in a monk, he was generous, profuse, and loved good cheer, without the least tincture of greediness. After our concerts, he always used to stay to supper with Mamma, and these evenings passed with the greatest gayety and good-humor; we conversed with complete freedom, and sang duets; I was perfectly at my ease, had sallies of wit and merriment; Père Caton was charming, Mamma was adorable, and the Abbé Palais, with his rough voice, was the butt of the company. Pleasing moments of sportive youth, how long since have ye fled!

As I shall have no more occasion to speak of poor Père Caton, I will here conclude in few words his melancholy history. His brother monks, jealous—or rather exasperated—at seeing in him a merit and elegance of manners which savored nothing of monastic stupidity, conceived a violent hatred for him, because he was not as despicable as themselves; the chiefs, therefore, combined against this worthy man, and set on

the envious rabble of monks, who otherwise would not have dared to hazard the attack. He received a thousand indignities; they degraded him from his office, took away the apartment which he had furnished with elegant simplicity, and at length banished him I know not whither. In short, these wretches overwhelmed him with so many evils that his honest and proud soul sank under the pressure, and, after having been the delight of the most amiable societies, he died of grief, on a wretched bed, hid in some cell or dungeon, lamented by all worthy people of his acquaintance, who could find no fault with him, except his being a monk.

Accustomed to this manner of life for some time, I became so entirely attached to music that I could think of nothing else. I went to my business with disgust; the necessary confinement and assiduity appeared an insupportable punishment, which I at length wished to relinquish, that I might give myself up without reserve to my favorite amusement. It will be readily believed that this folly met with some opposition; to relinquish a creditable employment and fixed salary to run after uncertain scholars was too giddy a plan to be approved of by Mamma, and, even supposing my future success should prove as great as I flattered myself it would be, it was fixing very humble limits to my ambition to think of reducing myself for life to the condition of a music-master. She, who formed for me the brightest projects, and no longer trusted implicitly to the judgment of Monsieur d'Aubonne, seeing with concern that I was so seriously occupied by a talent which she thought frivolous, frequently repeated to me that provincial proverb, which does not hold quite so good in Paris, "*Qui bien chante et bien danse, fait un métier qui peu*

avance." On the other hand, she saw me hurried away by this irresistible passion, my taste for music having become a furore, and it was much to be feared that my employment, suffering by my distraction, might draw on me a discharge, which would be worse than a voluntary resignation. I represented to her that this employment could not last long, that it was necessary I should have some permanent means of subsistence, and that it would be much better to complete by practice the acquisition of that art to which my inclination led me, and which she had chosen for me, than to seek for patronage, or make fresh essays, which possibly might not succeed, since by that course, having passed the age for learning, I might be left without a single resource for gaining a livelihood. In short, I extorted her consent more by importunity and caresses than by any satisfactory reasons. Proud of my success, I immediately ran to offer my resignation to Monsieur Coccoilli, Director-General of the Survey, as though I had performed the most heroic action, and quitted my employment without cause, reason, or pretext, with as much pleasure as I had accepted it less than two years before.

This step, ridiculous as it may appear, procured me a kind of consideration, which I found extremely useful. Some supposed I had resources which I did not possess; others, seeing me totally given up to music, judged of my abilities by the sacrifice I had made, and concluded that, with such a passion for the art, I must possess it in a superior degree. In the country of the blind the one-eyed men are kings. I passed here for an excellent master, because all the rest were bad ones. Possessing taste in singing, and being favored by my age and figure, I soon procured more scholars than were



sufficient to compensate for the loss of my secretary's pay. It is certain that, had it been reasonable to consider the pleasure of my situation only, it was impossible to pass more speedily from one extreme to the other. At our measuring, I was confined for eight hours daily to the most disagreeable employment, with yet more disagreeable company. Shut up in a melancholy counting-house, empoisoned by the smell and respiration of a number of clowns, the major part of whom were ill-combed and very dirty, what with close application, bad air, constraint, and weariness, I was sometimes so far overcome as to experience a vertigo. Instead of this, behold me admitted into the fashionable world, sought after in the first houses, and everywhere received with a gracious air of satisfaction; amiable and gaily dressed young ladies awaiting my arrival, and welcoming me with pleasure. I see nothing but charming objects, smell nothing but roses and orange-flowers; singing, chatting, laughter, and amusements perpetually succeed each other. It must be allowed that, reckoning all these advantages, no hesitation was possible in the choice; in fact, I was so content with mine that I never once repented it; nor do I even now, when, free from the irrational motives that influenced me at that time, I weigh in the scale of reason every action of my life.

This is, perhaps, the only time that, listening to the inclination, I was not deceived in my expectations. The easy accessibility, obliging temper, and free humor of this country rendered a commerce with the world agreeable, and the inclination I then felt for it proves to me that, if I have a dislike for the society of mankind, it is more their fault than mine.

It is a pity the Savoyards are not rich; though, perhaps,

it would be a still greater pity if they were so, for as it is they are the best, the most sociable people that I know, and if there be a little town in the world where the pleasures of life are experienced in an agreeable and friendly commerce, it is Chambéri. The gentry of the province who assemble there have only sufficient wealth to live and not enough to spoil them; they cannot give way to ambition, but follow, through necessity, the counsel of Cineas, devoting their youth to a military employment, and returning home to grow old in peace, an arrangement over which honor and reason equally preside. The women are handsome, yet do not stand in need of beauty, since they possess all those qualifications which enhance its value and even supply its want. It is remarkable that, being obliged by my profession to see a number of young girls, I do not recollect one at Chambéri that was not charming. It will be said I was disposed to find them so, and perhaps there may be some truth in the surmise, though I do not believe their charms needed imaginary aid from me. I cannot remember my young scholars without pleasure. Why, in naming the most amiable, cannot I recall them, and myself also, to that happy age in which our moments, pleasing as innocent, were passed with such happiness together! The first was Mademoiselle de Mellarède, my neighbor, and sister to Monsieur Gaime's pupil. She was a fine, clear brunette, lively, gentle, and graceful, without giddiness; thin, as girls of that age usually are; but her bright eyes, slender shape, and easy air required not the additional attraction of plumpness. I went there every morning, when she was usually in undress, her hair carelessly turned up, and, on my arrival, ornamented with a flower, which was taken off at my depar-

ture that her hair might be dressed. There is nothing I fear so much as a pretty woman en déshabillé; I should dread her a hundred times less in full dress. Mademoiselle de Menthon, whom I attended in the afternoon, was ever so. She made an equally pleasing, but quite different impression on me. Her hair was flaxen, her person delicate, she was very timid, and extremely fair, had a clear voice, capable of just modulation, but which she had not the courage to employ to its full extent. She had the mark of a scald on her bosom, which a little scarf of blue chenille did not entirely cover: this scar sometimes drew my attention, though not absolutely on its own account. Mademoiselle de Challes, another of my neighbors, was a fully grown woman, tall, and well formed; she had been very pleasing, and, though no longer a beauty, might be quoted for her gracefulness, equal temper, and good-humor. Her sister, Madame de Charly, the handsomest woman of Chambéri, did not learn music; but I taught her daughter, who was yet young, and whose growing beauty promised to equal her mother's, if she had not unfortunately been a little red-haired. I had a scholar at the Visitation, a little French lady, whose name I have forgotten, but who merits a place in my list of preferences. She had adopted the slow, drawling tone of the nuns, in which voice she would utter some very keen things, which did not in the least appear to correspond with her manner; but she was indolent, and could not generally take pains to show her wit, that being a favor she did not grant to everyone. After a month or two of negligent attendance, this was an expedient she devised to make me more assiduous, for I could not easily persuade myself to be so. When with my scholars, I

was fond enough of teaching, but could not bear the idea of being obliged to attend at a particular hour; constraint and subjection in every shape are to me insupportable, and alone sufficient to make me hate even pleasure itself. It is said that in Mohammedan countries a man passes through the streets at daybreak bidding husbands awake and fulfill their duty to their wives. I should be a poor sort of Turk at such times.

I had some scholars likewise among the tradespeople, and, among others, one who was the indirect cause of a change of relationship, which, as I have promised to declare all, I must relate in its place. She was the daughter of a grocer, and was called Mademoiselle Lard, a perfect model for a Grecian statue, and whom I should quote for the handsomest girl I have ever seen, if true beauty could exist without life or soul. Her indolence, reserve, and insensibility were inconceivable; it was equally impossible to please or make her angry, and I am convinced that had anyone formed a design upon her virtue, he might have succeeded, not through her inclination, but her stupidity. Her mother, who would run no risk of this, did not leave her for a single moment. In having her taught to sing and providing a young master, she had hoped to enliven her, but it all proved ineffectual. While the master was admiring the daughter, the mother was admiring the master, but this was equally lost labor. Madame Lard added to her natural vivacity that portion of sprightliness which should have belonged to the daughter. She was a sharp little creature, with small sparkling eyes, slightly inflamed, and was marked with small-pox. On my arrival in the morning, I always found my coffee and cream ready, and the mother



never failed to welcome me with a sound kiss on the lips, which I would willingly have returned to the daughter, to see how she would have received it. All this was done with such an air of carelessness and simplicity, that even when Monsieur Lard was present her kisses and glances were not omitted. He was a good, quiet fellow, the true original of his daughter, nor did his wife endeavor to deceive him, because there was absolutely no occasion for it.

I received all these caresses with my usual stupidity, taking them only for marks of pure friendship, though they were sometimes troublesome ; for the lively Madame Lard was exacting, and if, during the day, I had passed the shop without calling, she would have chided me. It became necessary, therefore, when I had no time to spare, to go out of my way through another street, well knowing it was not so easy to quit her house as to enter it.

Madame Lard thought so much of me that I could not avoid thinking something of her. Her attentions affected me greatly, and I spoke of them to Mamma, without supposing any mystery in the matter, but had there been one I should equally have divulged it, for to have kept a secret of any kind from her would have been impossible. My heart lay as open to her as to heaven. She did not understand the matter quite so simply as I had done, but saw advances where I only discovered friendship. She concluded that Madame Lard would make a point of not leaving me as great a fool as she found me, and, some way or other, contrive to make herself understood ; but, exclusive of the consideration that it was not just that another should undertake the instruction of her pupil, she had motives more worthy of her, wishing to guard me

against the snares to which my youth and condition exposed me. Meantime, a more dangerous temptation offered, which I likewise escaped, but which proved to her that such a succession of dangers required every preservative she could possibly apply.

Madame la Comtesse de Menthon, mother to one of my scholars, was a woman of great wit, and reckoned to possess at least an equal share of mischief, having, as was reported, caused a number of quarrels, and, among others, one that terminated fatally for the house of Antremont. Mamma had seen enough of her to know her character; for having, very innocently, pleased some person to whom Madame de Menthon had pretensions, she found her guilty of the crime of this preference, though Madame de Warens had neither sought after nor accepted it, and from that moment endeavored to play her rival a number of ill turns, none of which succeeded. I shall relate one of the most whimsical, by way of specimen. They were together in the country, with several gentlemen of the neighborhood, and, among the rest, the aspirant in question. Madame de Menthon took an opportunity to say to one of these gentlemen that Madame de Warens was a *précieuse*, that she dressed ill, and, particularly, that she covered her neck like a tradeswoman. "Oh, for that matter," replied the person she was speaking to, who was fond of a joke, "she has good reason, for I know she is marked with a great ugly rat on the bosom, so naturally that it even appears to be running." Hatred, as well as love, renders its votaries credulous. Madame de Menthon resolved to make use of this discovery, and one day, while Mamma was at cards with this lady's ungrateful favorite, she took the opportunity of going behind

her rival; then drawing back and half overturning her chair, she dexterously pulled off her mouchoir; but, instead of this hideous rat, the gentleman beheld a far different object, which it was not more easy to forget than to obtain a sight of, and which by no means answered the intentions of the lady.

I was not calculated to engross the attention of Madame de Menthon, who loved to be surrounded by brilliant company; notwithstanding, she bestowed some attention on me, not for the sake of my person, which she certainly did not regard, but for the reputation of wit which I had acquired, and which might have rendered me useful to her predominant inclination. She had a very lively passion for ridicule, and loved to write songs and lampoons on those who displeased her. Had she found me possessed of sufficient talents to aid the fabrication of her verses, and complaisance enough to do so, we should presently have turned Chambéri upside down. These libels would have been traced to their source, Madame de Menthon would have saved herself by sacrificing me, and I should have been cooped in prison, perhaps, for the rest of my life, as a recompense for having figured as the Apollo of the ladies.

Fortunately, nothing of this kind happened; Madame de Menthon made me stay to dinner twice or thrice, to chat with me, and soon found I was too dull for her purpose. I felt this myself, and was humiliated at the discovery, envying the talents of my friend Venture; though I should rather have been obliged to my stupidity for keeping me out of the reach of danger. I remained, therefore, for Madame de Menthon her daughter's singing-master, and nothing more; but I lived happily, and was ever well received at Chambéri, which was a





to find her smiling, and her disconcerting me by her delectable power of her bewitching; but, instead of being attracted by a smiling beauty, I had a far different object, which was not so easy to reach, than to obtain a sight of the lovely face which had attracted the attentions of the lady.

I had not calculated to engage the attention of Madame de Warens, who was then surrounded by brilliant company. She did not bestow some attention on me, but not as much as I wished, which she certainly did not do for the sake of the wit which I had acquired, but for the sake of the wit which I had acquired, which she certainly did not do for the sake of the wit which I had acquired. I had not calculated to engage the attention of Madame de Warens, who was then surrounded by brilliant company. She did not bestow some attention on me, but not as much as I wished, which she certainly did not do for the sake of the wit which I had acquired, but for the sake of the wit which I had acquired. I had not calculated to engage the attention of Madame de Warens, who was then surrounded by brilliant company. She did not bestow some attention on me, but not as much as I wished, which she certainly did not do for the sake of the wit which I had acquired, but for the sake of the wit which I had acquired.

Fortunately nothing of this kind happened; Madame de Warens made me sing to dinner twice or thrice, and she told me and even told I was too dull for her purpose. I felt this myself and was mortified at the discovery, and I was mortified at the discovery, and I was mortified at the discovery. I felt this myself and was mortified at the discovery, and I was mortified at the discovery. I felt this myself and was mortified at the discovery, and I was mortified at the discovery. I felt this myself and was mortified at the discovery, and I was mortified at the discovery.



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thousand times more desirable than passing for a wit with her, and for a serpent with everybody else.

However this might be, Mamma saw that in order to save me from the perils of youth, it was now necessary to treat me as a man. This she immediately set about, but in the most extraordinary manner that any woman, in similar circumstances, ever devised. I all at once perceived that her manner was graver, and her discourse more moral than usual. To the playful gayety with which she used to intermingle her instructions suddenly succeeded a uniformity of manner, neither familiar nor severe, but which seemed to prepare me for some explanation. After having vainly racked my brain for the reason of this change, I mentioned it to her. This she had expected, and immediately proposed a walk to our garden the next day. Accordingly, we went there the next morning; she had contrived that we should remain alone the whole day, which she employed in preparing me for those favors she meant to bestow—not as another woman would have done, by scheming and coquetry, but by discourses full of sentiment and reason, rather tending to instruct than seduce, and which spoke more to my heart than to my senses. Meantime, however excellent and to the purpose these discourses might be, and though far enough from coldness or melancholy, I did not listen to them with all the attention they merited, nor fix them in my memory as I should have done at any other time. That air of preparation which she had adopted gave me a degree of inquietude; while she spoke, in spite of myself I was thoughtful and absent, less attentive to what she said than curious to know what she aimed at; and, no sooner had I comprehended her design,



which I could not easily do, than the novelty of the idea, which during all the years I had passed with her had never once entered my imagination, took such entire possession of me that I was no longer capable of minding what she said. I only thought of her; I heard her no longer.

Thinking to render young minds attentive to what you would tell them by proposing some highly interesting object as the result of it, is an error instructors frequently run into, and one which I myself have not avoided in my *Émile*. The young pupil, struck with the object presented to him, is occupied only with that, and, leaping lightly over your preliminary discourses, fixes at once on the point, to which, in his idea, you lead him too tediously. To render him attentive, he must be prevented from seeing your design beforehand; and, in this particular, Mamma behaved with awkwardness. By a singularity which adhered to her systematic disposition, she took the vain precaution of proposing conditions; but the moment I knew the purchase I no longer even heard them, but immediately consented to everything; and I doubt whether there is a man on the whole earth who would have been frank or courageous enough to dispute terms, or one single woman who would have pardoned such a dispute. By a continuation of the same whimsicality, she attached a number of the gravest formalities to the agreement, and gave me eight days to think of them, which I assured her I had no need of, though that assurance was far from the truth; for, to complete this assemblage of singularities, I was very glad to have this intermission; so much had the novelty of these ideas struck me, and such disorder did I feel in mine, that it required time to arrange them.

It will be supposed that these eight days appeared to me as many ages ; on the contrary, I should have been very glad if they had lasted so long. I find it difficult to describe the state in which I found myself ; it was a strange chaos of fear and impatience, dreading what I desired, and even studying some fair pretext to evade my happiness. Let my ardent and amorous temperament be remembered, my blood inflamed, my heart intoxicated with love, my health and vigor, my time of life ; let it be remembered that, filled with greedy desires, I had never been really intimate with women ; that imagination, necessity, vanity, and curiosity united to devour me with the longings to be a man and to appear one ; above all, let it not be forgotten that my strong and tender attachment to her, far from having diminished, had daily gained additional strength ; let it be considered that I was only happy when with her, and quitted her only to meditate on her excellences ; that my heart was full, not only of her bounty, of her amiable disposition, but of her sex, of her person, of herself ; in a word, conceive me united to her by every affinity that could possibly render her dear ; nor let it be supposed that, being ten or twelve years older than myself, she began to grow an old woman, or was so in my opinion. From the time, five or six years before, when the first sight of her had made such a fond impression on me, she had really altered very little, and in my mind not at all. To me she was ever charming, and was still thought so by everyone. Her figure had acquired a slight fullness, but she had the same fine eyes, the same clear complexion, the same bosom, the same features, the same beautiful light hair, the same gayety, and even the same voice, whose youthful and silvery sound made so lively an impression on my heart

that, even to this day, I cannot hear without emotion a young woman's voice that is at all harmonious.

Naturally, what I had most to fear in waiting for the possession of so lovely a person was anticipation, an inability to govern sufficiently my desires and my imagination, so as to remain master of myself. It will be seen that, in a more advanced age, the bare idea of some trifling favors I had to expect from the person I loved inflamed me so far that I could not support with any degree of patience the time necessary to traverse the short space that separated us. How, then, by what miracle—when in the flower of my youth—had I so little impatience for the first enjoyment? How could I see the moment advancing with more pain than pleasure? Why, instead of transports that should have intoxicated me, did I experience almost fear and repugnance? I have no doubt that if I could have avoided this happiness with any degree of decency I should have relinquished it with all my heart. I have promised to relate extravagances in the history of my attachment to her; this certainly is one that no one can have expected.

The reader, already disgusted, supposes that, being already possessed by another, she degraded herself in my opinion by this participation, and that a sentiment of disesteem weakened those she had before inspired me with; but he is mistaken. True, this participation gave me a cruel uneasiness, as well from a very natural sentiment of delicacy, as because it appeared unworthy both of her and myself; but, as to my sentiments for her, they were still the same, and I can solemnly aver that I never loved her more tenderly than when I felt so little desire to possess her. I was too well acquainted

with the chastity of her heart and the iciness of her constitution to suppose for a moment that the gratification of the senses had any influence in this abandonment of herself. I was perfectly sure that her careful attention to tearing me from dangers otherwise inevitable, and keeping me entirely to myself and my duties, made her infringe one which she did not regard from the same point of view as other women, of which more will be said hereafter. I pitied her, and pitied myself. I had an inclination to tell her "No, Mamma, it is not necessary; I can answer for myself without it." But I dared not—first, because it was a thing not to be said, and that I inwardly knew in my heart was not true; that, in fact, a woman was necessary to keep me from other women, and secure me from temptation. Without longing to possess her, I was glad that she prevented me from wishing to possess others; so much did I look on everything which could divert me from her as a misfortune.

The habit of living a long time innocently together, far from weakening the first sentiments I felt for her, had contributed to strengthen them, giving a more lively, a more tender, but at the same time a less sensual, turn to my affection. Having ever accustomed myself to call her "Mamma," and enjoying the familiarity of a son, it became natural to consider myself as such; and I am inclined to think this was the true reason of my lack of eagerness for the possession of a person I so tenderly loved; for I can perfectly recollect that my emotions on first seeing her, though not more lively, were more voluptuous. At Annecy I was intoxicated, at Chambéry I was no longer so. I always loved her as passionately as possible, but I now loved her more for



herself and less on my own account; or, at least, I sought rather for happiness than pleasure in her company. She was more to me than a sister, a mother, a friend, or even than a mistress; in a word, I loved her too much to covet her; such is the clearest idea in my mind.

This day, more dreaded than hoped for, at length arrived. I promised everything that was required of me, and I kept my word; my heart confirmed my engagements without desiring the prize. I obtained it, nevertheless. I found myself for the first time in the arms of a woman—of a woman, too, whom I adored. Was I happy? No: I tasted pleasure. I know not what invincible sadness empoisoned its relish; it seemed that I had committed an incest, and two or three times, pressing her eagerly in my arms, I deluged her bosom with my tears. As for her, she was neither sad nor sprightly; she was caressing and calm. Little inclined to sensuality, she did not seek for gross pleasures, did not experience their delights, nor ever felt the remorse that often follows them.

I repeat it, all her failings were the effect of her errors, never of her passions. She was well born, her heart was pure; she loved good manners, her desires were regular and virtuous, her taste delicate; she seemed formed for that elegant purity of manners which she ever loved, but never practised, because, instead of listening to the dictates of her heart, she followed those of her reason, which led her astray. When false principles drew her from the right path, her true sentiments have always veiled them. Unhappily, she piqued herself on philosophy, and the morals she drew from thence clouded the genuine purity of her heart.

Monsieur de Tavel, her first lover, was her instructor in

this philosophy, and the principles he instilled into her mind were such as tended to seduce her. Finding her cold and impregnable on the side of her passions, and firmly attached to her husband and her duty, he attacked her by sophisms, endeavoring to prove that the list of duties she thought so sacred was but a sort of catechism, fit only for children; that the union of the sexes was, in itself, absolutely indifferent; that all the morality of conjugal faith consisted in opinion, the contentment of husbands being the only reasonable rule of duty in wives; consequently, that concealed infidelities, doing no injury, could be no crimes; in a word, he persuaded her that the sin consisted only in the scandal, that woman being really virtuous who took care to appear so. Thus the deceiver obtained his end in subverting the reason of a girl whose heart he found it impossible to corrupt, and received his punishment in a devouring jealousy, being persuaded that she treated him as he had prevailed on her to treat her husband. I do not know whether he was mistaken in this respect: the Minister Perret passed for his successor; all I know is that the coldness of temperament which it might have been supposed would have kept this young woman from embracing this system, in the end prevented her from renouncing it. She could not conceive how so much importance should be given to what seemed to have none for her; nor could she honor with the name of virtue an abstinence which cost her so little.

She did not, therefore, give in to this false principle on her own account, but for the sake of others; and that from another maxim almost as false as the former, but more consonant to the generosity of her disposition. She was persuaded

that nothing could attach a man so truly to any woman as possession, and though she was only susceptible of friendship, this friendship was so tender that she made use of every means which depended on her to secure the objects of it, and, which is very extraordinary, almost always succeeded; for she was so truly amiable that an increase of intimacy was sure to discover additional reasons for loving her. Another thing worthy of remark is, that after her first folly she only favored the unfortunate. Lovers in a more brilliant station lost their labor with her, but the man who at first attracted her pity must have possessed very few good qualities if in the end he did not obtain her affection. Even when she made an unworthy choice, far from proceeding from base inclinations, which were strangers to her noble heart, it was the effect of a disposition too generous, humane, compassionate, and sensible, which she did not always govern with sufficient discernment.

If some false principles misled her, how many admirable ones did she not possess, which never forsook her! By how many virtues did she atone for her failings! if we can call by that name errors in which the senses had so little share. The man who in one particular deceived her so completely had given her excellent instructions in a thousand others; and her passions, far from turbulent, permitting her to follow the dictates of reason, she ever acted wisely when her sophisms did not intervene. Her motives were laudable even in her failings. False principle might lead her to do ill, but she never did anything which she conceived to be wrong. She abhorred lying and duplicity, was just, equitable, humane, disinterested, true to her word, her friends, and those duties

which she conceived to be such; incapable of hatred or revenge, and not even conceiving that there was a merit in pardoning; in fine—to return to those qualities which were less excusable—though she did not properly value, she never made a vile barter of her favors; she lavished, but never sold them, though continually reduced to expedients for a subsistence; and I dare assert that, if Socrates could esteem Aspasia, he would have respected Madame de Warens.

I am well aware that in ascribing sensibility of heart with coldness of temperament to the same person, I shall generally, and with some reason, be accused of a contradiction. Perhaps Nature blundered, and this combination ought not to have existed; I only know it did exist. All those who knew Madame de Warens, a great number of whom are yet living, have had opportunities of knowing this was a fact; I dare even aver she had but one pleasure in the world, which was pleasing those she loved. Let everyone argue on the point as he likes, and gravely prove that this cannot be; my business is to declare the truth, and not to enforce belief.

I learned by degrees the particulars I have just related in those conversations which succeeded our union, and alone rendered it delicious. She was right when she concluded her complaisance would be useful to me: I derived great advantages from it in point of instruction. Hitherto she had used me as a child; she now began to treat me as a man, and spoke of herself. Everything she said was so interesting, and I was so sensibly touched with it, that, reasoning with myself, I applied these confidential relations to my own improvement, and received more instruction from them than from her teaching. When we truly feel that the heart speaks, our own



opens to hear its voice ; nor can all the pompous morality of a pedagogue have half the effect that is produced by the tender, affectionate, and artless conversation of a sensible woman on him who loves her.

The intimacy in which I lived with her having placed me more advantageously in her opinion than formerly, she began to think, notwithstanding my awkward manner, that I deserved cultivation for the polite world, and that, if I could one day show myself there in an eligible situation, I should soon be able to make my way. In consequence of this idea, she set about forming not only my judgment, but my address, endeavoring to render me amiable as well as estimable ; and if it be true that success in this world is consistent with strict virtue—which, for my part, I do not believe—I am certain there is no other road than that she had taken and wished to point out to me. For Madame de Warens knew mankind, and understood exquisitely well the art of treating all ranks, without falsehood and without imprudence, neither deceiving nor provoking them ; but this art was rather in her disposition than her precepts ; she knew better how to practise than explain it ; and I was of all the world the least calculated to become master of such an attainment. Accordingly, the means employed for this purpose were nearly lost labor, as well as the pains she took to procure me a fencing and a dancing master. Though easy in movement, without clumsiness, and well made, I could never learn to dance a minuet ; for, being plagued with corns, I had acquired a habit of walking on my heels, which Roche could never break me of ; and never, without an appearance of effort, could I jump an ordinary ditch. It was still worse at the fencing-school, where, after

three months' practice, I made but very little progress, and could never attempt fencing with any but my master. My wrist was not supple enough, nor my arm sufficiently firm to retain the foil, whenever he chose to make it fly out of my hand. Added to this, I had a mortal aversion both to the art itself and to the person who undertook to teach it to me, nor should I ever have imagined that anyone could have been so proud of the science of slaying men. To bring his vast genius within the compass of comprehension, he explained himself by comparisons drawn from music, of which he understood nothing. He found striking analogies between a hit in *quarte* or *tierce* with the intervals of music which bear these names. When he made a feint, he cried out "Take care of this *diesis*," because anciently they called the *diesis* a *feint*; and when he made the foil fly from my hand, he would add with a sneer that this was a *pause*. In a word, I never in my life saw a more insupportable pedant than this poor fellow, with his *plumet* and his *plastron*.

I made, therefore, but little progress in my exercises, which I presently quitted from pure disgust; but I succeeded better in an art of more value—namely, that of being content with my situation, and not desiring one more brilliant, for which I began to be persuaded Nature had not designed me. Given up to the endeavor of rendering Mamma happy, I was ever best pleased when in her company, and, notwithstanding my fondness for music, began to grudge the time I employed in giving lessons to my scholars.

I am ignorant whether Anet perceived the full extent of our intimacy, but I am inclined to think he was no stranger to it. He was a young man of great penetration, and still

greater discretion; who never belied his sentiments, but did not always speak them. Without giving me the least hint that he was acquainted with the matter, he appeared by his conduct to be so; nor did this moderation proceed from baseness of soul, but, having entered entirely into the principles of his mistress, he could not reasonably disapprove of the natural consequences of them. Though as young as herself, he was so grave and thoughtful that he looked on us as two children who required indulgence, and we regarded him as a respectable man, whose esteem we had to preserve. It was not until after she was unfaithful to Anet that I learned the strength of her attachment to him. As she was fully sensible that I only thought, felt, or lived for her, she let me see therefore how much she loved him, that I might love him likewise, and dwelt less on her friendship than on her esteem for him, because this was the sentiment that I could most fully share. How often has she affected our hearts, and made us embrace with tears, by assuring us that we were both necessary to her happiness! Let not women read this with an ill-natured smile; with the temperament she possessed, this necessity was not equivocal, it was only that of the heart.

Thus there was established, among us three, a society without example, perhaps, on the face of the earth. All our wishes, our cares, our very hearts were for each other, and absolutely confined to this little circle. The habit of living together, and living exclusively from the rest of the world, became so strong, that if at our repasts one of the three were wanting, or a fourth person came in, everything seemed deranged; and, notwithstanding our particular attachments, even our tête-à-tête meetings were less agreeable than our

reunion. What banished constraint was a lively reciprocal confidence, and dullness could find no place among us, because we were fully employed. Madame de Warens, always projecting, always busy, left us no time for idleness, though, indeed, we had each sufficient employment on our own account. It is my maxim, that idleness is as much the pest of society as of solitude. Nothing more contracts the mind, or engenders more tales, mischief, gossiping, and lies, than for people to be eternally shut up in the same apartment together, and reduced, from the want of employment, to the necessity of an incessant chat. When everyone is busy, unless you have really something to say, you may continue silent; but, if you have nothing to do, you must absolutely speak continually, and this, in my mind, is the most burdensome and the most dangerous constraint. I will go farther, and maintain that, to render company harmless, as well as agreeable, it is necessary, not only that each should have something to do, but something that requires a degree of attention. Knitting, for instance, is absolutely as bad as doing nothing; you must take as much pains to amuse a woman whose fingers are thus employed as if she sat with her arms folded; but let her embroider, and it is a different matter: her occupation is sufficient to fill up the intervals of silence. What is most disgusting and ridiculous, during these intermissions of conversation, is to see, perhaps, a dozen overgrown fellows get up, sit down again, walk backwards and forwards, turn on their heels, play with the chimney ornaments, and rack their brains to maintain an inexhaustible chain of words. What a charming occupation! Such people, wherever they go, must be troublesome both to others and them-



selves. When I was at Motiers, I used to employ myself in making laces with my neighbors, and, were I again to mix with the world, I would always carry a cup-and-ball in my pocket, and would sometimes play with it the whole day, that I might not be constrained to speak when I had nothing to discourse about. If everyone would do the same, mankind would be less mischievous, their company would become more rational, and, in my opinion, a vast deal more agreeable. In a word, let wits laugh as they please, but I maintain that the only practical lesson of morality within the reach of the present age is that of the cup-and-ball.

However, they did not give us the trouble of studying expedients to avoid weariness when by ourselves, for a troop of importunate visitors gave us too much by their company, to feel any when alone. The annoyance they formerly gave me had not diminished; all the difference was that I now found less opportunity to abandon myself to my dissatisfaction. Poor Mamma had not lost her old predilection for schemes and systems. On the contrary, the more she felt the pressure of her domestic necessities, the more she endeavored to extricate herself from them by visionary projects; and, in proportion to the decrease of her present resources, she contrived to enlarge in idea those of the future. Increase of years only strengthened this folly: as she lost her relish for the pleasures of the world and youth, she replaced it by an additional fondness for secrets and projects. Her house was never clear of quacks, contrivers of new manufactures, alchemists, projectors of all kinds, whose discourse began by a distribution of millions, and concluded by a request for a crown-piece. No one went from her empty-handed; and what

astonished me most was how she could so long support such profusion without exhausting the source, or wearying her creditors.

Her principal project at the time I am now speaking of—not the most unreasonable of those she favored—was that of establishing a Royal Botanic Garden at Chambéri, with a demonstrator attached to it. It will be unnecessary to add for whom this office was designed. The situation of this town, in the midst of the Alps, was extremely favorable to botany, and Mamma, who was always for helping out one project with another, proposed that a College of Pharmacy should be added; which really would have been a very useful foundation in so poor a country, where apothecaries are almost the only medical practitioners. The retirement of Grossi, the chief physician, to Chambéri, on the demise of King Victor, seemed to favor this idea, or, perhaps, first suggested it. However this may be, by flattery and attention she set about managing Grossi, who, in fact, was not very manageable, being the most caustic and brutal, for a man who had any pretensions to the quality of a gentleman, that ever I knew. The reader may judge for himself by two or three traits which I shall add by way of specimen.

He assisted one day at a consultation with some other doctors, and among the rest was a young gentleman from Annecy, who was physician in ordinary to the sick person. This young man—being but indifferently taught for a doctor—was bold enough to differ in opinion from Monsieur Grossi, who only answered him by asking him when he should return, which way he meant to take, and what conveyance he should make use of. The other, having satisfied Grossi in these

particulars, asked him if there were anything he could serve him in. "Nothing, nothing," answered he; "only I shall place myself at a window in your way, that I may have the pleasure of seeing an ass ride on horseback." His avarice equaled his riches and want of feeling. One of his friends wanted to borrow some money of him on good security. "My friend," answered he, shaking him by the arm, and grinding his teeth, "should St. Peter descend from heaven to borrow ten pistoles of me, and offer the Trinity as surety, I would not lend them." One day, being invited to dinner with Comte Picon, Governor of Savoy, who was very religious, he arrived before it was ready, and found his excellency busy at his devotions, who proposed to him the same employment. Not knowing how to refuse, he knelt down with a frightful grimace, but had hardly recited two Aves when, not able to contain himself any longer, he rose hastily, snatched his hat and cane, and, without speaking a word, made off. Comte Picon ran after him, crying, "Monsieur Grossi! Monsieur Grossi! stop; there's a most excellent partridge on the spit for you." "Monsieur le Comte," replied the other, turning his head, "though you should give me a roasted angel, I would not stay." Such was Monsieur le Proto-médecin Grossi, whom Mamma undertook and succeeded in taming. Though his time was very much occupied, he accustomed himself to come frequently to her house, conceived a friendship for Anet, seemed to think him intelligent, spoke of him with esteem, and, what would not have been expected from such a brute, affected to treat him with respect, wishing to efface the impressions of the past; for, though Anet was no longer on the footing of a domestic, it was known that he had been one, and nothing less

than the countenance and manner of the chief physician was necessary to set an example of respect which would not otherwise have been paid him. Thus, Claude Anet, with a black coat, a well-dressed wig, a grave, decent behavior, a circumspect conduct, a tolerable knowledge in medical and botanical matters, and the patronage of the chief of the faculty, might reasonably have hoped to fill, with universal satisfaction, the place of Royal Demonstrator of Botany, had the proposed establishment taken place. Grossi, indeed, highly approved of the plan, and only waited an opportunity to propose it to the administration, whenever a return of peace should permit them to think of useful institutions, and enable them to spare the necessary pecuniary supplies.

But this project, whose execution would probably have plunged me into botanical studies, for which I am inclined to think Nature designed me, failed through one of those unexpected strokes which frequently overthrow the best concerted plans. I was destined to become by degrees an example of human misery; and it might be said that Providence, who called me to these extraordinary trials, put aside every obstacle that could prevent my encountering them. In an excursion which Anet made to the top of the mountain to seek for *génipi*, a rare plant that grows only on the Alps, and which Monsieur Grossi had occasion for, he unfortunately heated himself so much that he was seized with a pleurisy which *génipi* could not relieve, though said to be specific in that disorder; and, notwithstanding all the art of Grossi, who certainly was very skillful, and all the care of his good mistress and myself, he died on the fifth day of his disorder, in the most cruel agonies. During his illness he had no exhor-



tations but mine, bestowed with such transports of grief and zeal that, had he been in a state to understand them, they must have been some consolation to him. Thus I lost the firmest friend I ever had; a man estimable and extraordinary, in whom Nature supplied the defects of education, and who, though in a state of servitude, possessed all the virtues essential to a great man, which, perhaps, the world would have acknowledged him to be, had he lived and possessed opportunities.

The next day I spoke of him to Mamma with the most sincere and lively sense of affliction; when, suddenly, in the midst of our conversation, the vile, unworthy thought occurred that I should inherit his wardrobe, and particularly a handsome black coat, which I thought very becoming. As I thought this, I consequently uttered it; for when with her, to think and to speak was the same thing. Nothing could have made her feel more forcibly the loss she had sustained than this mean and odious observation, disinterestedness and greatness of soul being qualities which the deceased had eminently possessed. The poor woman turned from me, and, without any reply, burst into tears. Dear and precious tears; their reprehension was fully felt; they ran into my very heart, washing from thence even the smallest traces of such despicable and unworthy sentiments, never to return.

This loss caused Mamma as much inconvenience as sorrow, since from this moment her affairs were still more deranged. Anet was extremely exact, and kept everything in order: his vigilance was universally feared, and this restrained profusion. She herself, to avoid his censure, kept her dissipation within bounds; his attachment was not sufficient, she

wished to preserve his esteem, and avoid the just remonstrances he sometimes took the liberty to make, by representing that she squandered the property of others as well as her own. I thought as he did—nay, I even sometimes expressed myself to the same effect, but had not an equal ascendancy over her, and my advice did not make the same impression. On his decease I was obliged to occupy his place, for which I had as little inclination as ability, and therefore filled it ill. I was not sufficiently careful, and so very timid that, though I frequently found fault with myself, I suffered matters to take their own course; besides, though equal confidence was reposed in me, I had not the same authority. I saw the disorder that prevailed, trembled at it, sometimes complained, but was never attended to. I was too young and lively to have any pretension to the exercise of reason, and, when I would have acted the censor, Mamma, calling me her little Mentor, with two or three playful slaps on the cheek, brought me back to my proper self.

An idea of the certain distress into which her ill-regulated expenses, sooner or later, must necessarily plunge her, made a stronger impression on me since I had become the inspector of her household, and had a better opportunity of calculating the inequality that subsisted between her income and her expenditure. I even date from this period the beginning of that inclination to avarice of which I have ever since been sensible. I was never foolishly prodigal, except by intervals; but till then I was never concerned whether I had much or little money. I now began to pay more attention to this circumstance, taking care of my purse, and becoming mean from a laudable motive; for I only sought to insure to Mamma

some resource against that catastrophe which I foresaw. I feared her creditors would seize her pension, or that it might be discontinued, and she reduced to want, when I foolishly imagined that the trifle I could save might be of essential service to her; but, to accomplish this, it was necessary I should conceal what I meant to make a reserve of; for it would have been an awkward circumstance, while she was driven to expedients, to let her know that I had a little hoard. Accordingly, I sought out some hiding-places, where I laid up a few louis, resolving to augment this stock from time to time, till I had a convenient opportunity to lay it at her feet; but I was so incautious in the choice of my repositories that she always discovered them, and, to convince me that she did so, changed the gold I had concealed for a larger sum in different pieces. Ashamed of these discoveries, I brought back to the common purse my little treasure, which she never failed to lay out in clothes or other things for my use, such as a silver-hilted sword, watch, or the like.

Being convinced that I should never succeed in accumulating money, and that what I could save would furnish but a very slender resource, I concluded that there was no other way of averting the threatened misfortune save placing myself in such a situation that I might be enabled to provide for her, whenever she, through lack of means, should be unable to provide for me. Unhappily, seeking these resources on the side of my inclinations, I foolishly determined to consider music as my principal dependence; and ideas of harmony rising in my brain, I imagined that, if placed in a proper situation to profit by them, I should acquire celebrity, and presently become a modern Orpheus, whose tunes would attract all the riches of

Peru. As I began to read music tolerably well, the question was, how I should learn composition. The difficulty lay in meeting with a good master, for with the assistance of my "Rameau" alone I despaired of ever being able to accomplish it; and, since the departure of Monsieur Le Maître, there was nobody in Savoy who understood anything of the principles of harmony.

I am now about to relate another of those inconsequences of which my life is full, and which have so frequently carried me directly from my designs, even when I thought myself immediately within reach of them. Venture had spoken to me in very high terms of the Abbé Blanchard, who had taught him composition; a deserving man, possessed of great talents, who was music-master to the Cathedral at Besançon, and is now in that capacity at the Chapel of Versailles. I therefore determined to go to Besançon and take some lessons from the Abbé Blanchard; and the idea appeared so rational to me that I soon brought Mamma to the same opinion. She set about the preparations for my journey, in the same style of profusion with which all her plans were executed. Thus this project for preventing a bankruptcy, and repairing in future the waste of dissipation, began by causing her to expend eight hundred francs; her ruin being accelerated that I might be put in a condition to prevent it. Foolish as this conduct may appear, the illusion was complete on my part, and even on hers; for I was persuaded that I wrought for her emolument, and she thought she was highly promoting mine.

I expected to find Venture still at Annecy, and to obtain a recommendatory letter from him to the Abbé Blanchard; but he had left that place, and I was obliged to content



myself in the room of it with a mass in four parts, of his composition, which he had left with me. With this recommendation I set out for Besançon, by way of Geneva, where I saw my relations ; and through Nyon, where I saw my father, who received me in his usual manner, and promised to forward my portmanteau, which, as I traveled on horseback, came after me. I arrived at Besançon, and was kindly received by the Abbé Blanchard, who promised me his instruction, and offered his services in any other particular. We had just set about our music, when I received a letter from my father, informing me that my portmanteau had been seized and confiscated at Les Rousses, a French barrier on the side of Switzerland. Alarmed at the news, I employed the acquaintance I had formed at Besançon to learn the motive of this confiscation. Being certain there was nothing contraband among my baggage, I could not conceive on what pretext it could have been seized ; at length, however, I learned the facts, which, being curious, must not be omitted.

I became acquainted at Chambéri with a very worthy old man, from Lyons, named Monsieur Duvivier, who had been employed at the Visa, under the Regency, and, for want of other business, now assisted at the Survey. He had lived in the polite world, possessed talents, was good-humored, and understood music. As we both wrote in the same chamber, we preferred each other's acquaintance to that of the unlicked cubs that surrounded us. He had some correspondents at Paris, who furnished him with those little nothings, those daily novelties, which circulate, one knows not why, and die, one cares not when, without anyone thinking of them longer than they are heard. As I sometimes took him to

dine with Mamma, he in some measure treated me with respect, and, wishing to render himself agreeable, endeavored to make me fond of these trifles, for which I had naturally such a distaste that I never in my life read any of them. Unhappily one of these accursed papers happened to be in the waistcoat pocket of a new suit, which I had only worn two or three times to prevent its being seized by the commissioners of the customs. This paper contained an insipid Jansenist parody on the great scene in Racine's *Mithridate*. I had not read ten lines of it, but by forgetfulness left it in my pocket, and this caused all my necessaries to be confiscated. The commissioners, at the head of the inventory of my portmanteau, set a most pompous procès-verbal, in which it was taken for granted that this manuscript came from Geneva for the sole purpose of being printed and distributed in France, and then ran into holy invectives against the enemies of God and the Church, and praised the pious vigilance of those who had prevented the execution of this infernal machination. They doubtless found also that my shirts smelt of heresy, for, on the strength of this dreadful paper, they were all seized, and from that time I never received any account of my unfortunate portmanteau. The revenue officers whom I applied to for this purpose required so many instructions, informations, certificates, memorials, and so forth, that, lost a thousand times in the perplexing labyrinth, I was constrained to abandon them entirely. I feel a real regret for not having preserved the procès-verbal issued from the office of Les Rousses, for it was a piece calculated to hold a distinguished rank in the collection which is to accompany this work.

This loss immediately brought me back to Chambéri, without having learned anything of the Abbé Blanchard. Reasoning with myself on the events of this journey, and seeing that misfortunes attended all my enterprises, I resolved to attach myself solely to Mamma, to share her fortune, and distress myself no longer about future events, which I could not regulate. She received me as if I had brought back treasures, replaced by degrees my little wardrobe, and, though this misfortune fell heavily enough on both, it was forgotten almost as suddenly as it arrived.

Though this mischance had rather damped my musical ardor, I did not leave off studying my "Rameau," and, by repeated efforts, was at length able to understand it, and to make some little attempts at composition, the success of which encouraged me to proceed. The Comte de Bellegarde, son of the Marquis of Antremont, had returned from Dresden, after the death of King Augustus. Having long resided at Paris, he was fond of music, and particularly that of Rameau. His brother, the Comte de Nangis, played on the violin; Madame la Comtesse de la Tour, their sister, sang tolerably. This rendered music the fashion at Chambéri, and a kind of public concert was established there, the direction of which was at first designed for me; but they soon discovered that I was not competent to the undertaking, and it was otherwise arranged. Notwithstanding this, I continued writing a number of little pieces in my own way, and, among others, a cantata, which gained great approbation; it could not, indeed, be called a finished piece, but the airs were written in a style of novelty, and produced a good effect, which was not expected from me. These gentlemen could not believe that,

reading music so indifferently, it was possible I should compose any that was passable, and made no doubt that I had taken to myself the credit of some other person's labors. Monsieur de Nangis, wishing to be assured of this, called on me one morning with a cantata by Clérambault which he had transposed, as he said, to suit his voice, and to which another bass was necessary, the transposition having rendered that of Clérambault impracticable. I answered that it required considerable labor, and could not be done on the spot. Being convinced that I only sought an excuse, he pressed me to write at least the bass to a recitative. I did so—not well, doubtless, because, to attempt anything with success, I must have both time and freedom—but I did it according to rule, and he could not doubt my knowledge of the elements of composition. I did not, therefore, lose my scholars, though it blunted my passion for music to think that there should be a concert at Chambéri in which I was not necessary.

About this time, peace being concluded, the French army repassed the Alps. Several officers came to visit Mamma, and among others the Comte de Lautrec, Colonel of the regiment of Orléans, since Plenipotentiary of Geneva, and afterwards Marshal of France, to whom she presented me. On her recommendation he appeared to interest himself greatly in my behalf, promising a great deal, which he never remembered till the last year of his life, when I no longer stood in need of his assistance. The young Marquis de Sennecterre, whose father was then Ambassador at Turin, passed through Chambéri at the same time, and dined one day at Madame de Menthon's, when I happened to be among the guests. After dinner, the discourse turned upon music,



which the Marquis understood extremely well. The opera of *Jephthé* was then new. He mentioned this piece: it was brought him, and he made me tremble by proposing to execute it between us. He opened the book at that celebrated double chorus,

“ La terre, l'enfer, le ciel même,

Tout tremble devant le Seigneur ! ”

He said, “ How many parts will you take ? I will undertake these six.” I had not yet been accustomed to this trait of French vivacity, and, though acquainted with partitions, could not comprehend how one man could undertake to perform six, or even two, parts at the same time. Nothing has cost me more trouble in music than to skip lightly from one part to another, and have the eye at once on a whole partition. By the manner in which I evaded this trial, Monsieur de Sennecterre must have been inclined to believe that I did not understand music, and perhaps it was to satisfy himself in this particular that he proposed my noting a song that he wished to present to Mademoiselle de Menthon, in such a manner that I could not avoid it. He sang this song, and I wrote from his voice, without giving him much trouble to repeat it. When finished, he read my performance, and said—which was true—that it was very correctly noted. He had observed my embarrassment, and now seemed to enhance the merit of this little success. In reality, I then understood music very well, and only wanted that quickness at first sight which I possess in no one particular, and which is only to be acquired in this art by long and constant practice. Be that as it may, I was fully sensible of his kindness in endeavoring to efface from the minds of others, and even from my

own, the embarrassment I had experienced on this occasion. Twelve or fifteen years afterwards, meeting this gentleman at several houses in Paris, I was often tempted to remind him of this anecdote, and show him that I still remembered it; but he had lost his sight in the interval, I feared to give him pain by recalling to his memory how useful it formerly had been to him, and was therefore silent.

I now touch on the moment that binds my past existence to the present; some friendships of that period, prolonged to the present time, being very dear to me, have frequently made me regret that happy obscurity when those who called themselves my friends were really so—loved me for myself, through pure good-will, and not from the vanity of being acquainted with a conspicuous character, perhaps for the secret purpose of finding more occasions to injure him. From this time I date my first acquaintance with my old friend Gauffecourt, who, notwithstanding every effort to disunite us, has still remained so. Still remained so! No, alas! I have just lost him! but his affection terminated only with his life—death alone could put a period to our friendship. Monsieur de Gauffecourt was one of the most amiable men that ever existed; it was impossible to see him without affection, or to live with him without feeling a sincere attachment. In my life I never saw features more expressive of frankness, kindness, and serenity, or that marked more feeling, more understanding, or inspired greater confidence. However reserved one might be, it was impossible even at first sight to avoid being as free with him as if he had been an acquaintance of twenty years; for myself, who find so much difficulty to be at ease among new faces, I was familiar with him in a moment.

His manner, accent, and conversation perfectly suited his features. The sound of his voice was clear, full, and musical; it was an agreeable and expressive bass, which satisfied the ear, and sounded upon the heart. It was impossible to possess a more equal and pleasing vivacity, or more real and unaffected gracefulness, more natural talents, or cultivated with greater taste. Join to all these good qualities an affectionate heart, but loving rather too diffusively, and bestowing his favors with too little caution; serving his friends with zeal, or rather making himself the friend of everyone he could serve, yet contriving very dexterously to manage his own affairs while warmly pursuing the interests of others. Gauffecourt was the son of a simple clockmaker, and had been a clockmaker himself. His person and talents, however, soon called him to a superior situation. He became acquainted with Monsieur de la Closure, the French Resident at Geneva, who conceived a friendship for him, and procured him some connections at Paris, which were useful, and through whose influence he obtained the privilege of furnishing the salts of Valais, which was worth twenty thousand livres a year. This very amply satisfied his wishes with respect to fortune, but with regard to women there was more difficulty,—he had a wide field in which to choose, and chose accordingly. What renders his character more remarkable, and does him greater honor, is that though connected with all conditions he was universally esteemed and sought after without being envied or hated by anyone, and I really believe he passed through life without a single enemy. Happy man! He went every year to the baths of Aix, where the best company from the neighboring countries resorted, and, being on terms of friendship

with all the nobility of Savoy, came from Aix to Chambéri to see the Count de Bellegarde, and his father, the Marquis of Antremont. It was here that Mamma met him and introduced me to him, and this acquaintance, which appeared at that time to end in nothing, after many years had elapsed was renewed on an occasion which I shall relate, when it became a real friendship. I apprehend I am sufficiently authorized in speaking of a man to whom I was so firmly attached; but, even had I no personal interest in what concerned him, he was so truly amiable, and born with so many natural good qualities, that, for the honor of human nature, I should think it necessary to preserve his memory. This man, estimable as he was, had, like all other mortals, some failings, as will be seen hereafter; perhaps, had it not been so, he would have been less amiable, since, to render him as interesting as possible, it was necessary he should sometimes act in such a manner as to require a small portion of indulgence.

Another connection of the same time, that is not yet extinguished, and continues to flatter me with that idea of temporal happiness which it is so difficult to obliterate from the human heart, is Monsieur de Conzié, a Savoyard gentleman, then young and amiable, who had a fancy to learn music, or rather to be acquainted with the person who taught it. With great understanding and taste for polite acquirements, Monsieur de Conzié possessed a mildness of disposition which rendered him extremely attractive, especially to myself, who always like persons of his character. Our friendship was soon formed. The seeds of literature and philosophy which began to ferment in my brain, and only waited for culture and



emulation in order to spring up, found in him exactly what was wanting. Monsieur de Conzié had no great inclination for music, and this was useful to me, for the hours destined for lessons were passed anyhow save musically: we breakfasted, chatted, and read new publications—not a word of music. The correspondence between Voltaire and the Prince-Royal of Prussia then made a noise in the world, and these celebrated men were frequently the subject of our conversation, one of whom, recently seated on a throne, already indicated what he would prove himself hereafter; while the other, as much decried as he is now admired, made us sincerely lament the misfortunes that seemed to pursue him, and which are so frequently the appanage of superior talents. The Prince of Prussia had not been happy in his youth, and it appeared that Voltaire was destined never to be so. The interest we took in both parties extended to all that concerned them, and nothing that Voltaire wrote escaped us. The inclination I felt for these performances inspired me with a desire to write elegantly, and caused me to endeavor to imitate the beautiful style of that author, with whom I was enchanted. Some time after, his *Lettres Philosophiques* appeared. Though certainly not his best work, it greatly augmented my fondness for study; this was a rising inclination, which from that time has never been extinguished.

But the moment was not yet arrived when I should give myself up to it entirely: my rambling disposition, rather contracted than eradicated, being kept alive by our manner of living at Madame de Warens', which was too bustling for one of my solitary temper. The crowd of strangers who daily swarmed about her from all parts, and the certainty I felt that

these people sought only to dupe her—each in his particular mode—rendered home a torment. Since I had succeeded Anet in the confidence of his mistress, I had strictly examined her circumstances, and saw their evil tendency with horror. I had remonstrated a hundred times, prayed, argued, conjured, but all to no purpose. I had thrown myself at her feet, and strongly represented the catastrophe that threatened her; had earnestly entreated that she would reform her expenses, and begin with myself; representing that it was better to suffer something while she was yet young, than, by multiplying her debts and creditors, to expose her old age to vexation and misery. Sensible of the sincerity of my zeal, she was frequently affected, and would then make the finest promises in the world. But only let an artful schemer arrive, and in an instant all her good resolutions were forgotten. After a thousand proofs of the inefficacy of my remonstrances, what remained but to turn away my eyes from the ruin I could not prevent, and fly myself from the door I could not guard! I made, therefore, little journeys to Nyon, Geneva, and Lyons, which diverted my mind in some measure from this secret uneasiness, though it increased the cause by these additional expenses. I can truly aver that I should have acquiesced with pleasure in every retrenchment, had Mamma really profited by it; but, being persuaded that what I might refuse myself would be distributed among a set of interested villains, I took advantage of her easiness to partake with them, and, like the dog returning from the shambles, carried off a portion of that morsel which I could not protect.

Pretences were not wanting for all these journeys; even Mamma would alone have supplied me with more than were

necessary, having plenty of connections, negotiations, affairs, and commissions, which she wished to have executed by some trusty hand. In these cases she usually applied to me; I was always willing to go, and consequently found occasions enough to furnish out a rambling kind of life. These excursions procured me some good connections, which have since been agreeable or useful to me. Among others, I met at Lyons with Monsieur Perrichon, whose friendship I accuse myself of not having sufficiently cultivated, considering the kindness he had for me; and that of good Parisot, which I shall speak of in its place; at Grenoble, that of Madame Deybens and Madame la Présidente de Bardouan, a woman of great understanding, and who would have entertained a friendship for me, had it been in my power to see her oftener; at Geneva, that of Monsieur de la Closure, the French Resident, who often spoke to me of my mother, the remembrance of whom neither death nor time had erased from his heart; likewise those of the two Barillots, the father, who was very amiable, a good companion, and one of the most worthy men I ever met, calling me his grandson. During the troubles of the Republic these two citizens took contrary sides, the son siding with the people, the father with the magistrates. When they took up arms in 1737 I was at Geneva, and saw the father and son quit the same house armed, the one going to mount guard at the Hôtel de Ville, the other to his quarters, almost certain to meet face to face in the course of two hours, and prepared to give or receive death from each other. This unnatural sight made so lively an impression on me that I solemnly vowed never to interfere in any civil war, nor assist in deciding any internal dispute by arms, either person-

ally or by my influence, should I ever enter into my rights as a citizen. I can bring proofs of having kept this oath on a very delicate occasion, and it will be confessed—at least I should suppose so—that this moderation was of some worth.

But I had not yet arrived at that fermentation of patriotism which the first sight of Geneva in arms has since excited in my heart, as may be conjectured by a very grave fact that will not tell to my advantage, which I forgot to put in its proper place, but which ought not to be omitted.

My Uncle Bernard died in Carolina, where he had been employed for some years in the building of Charlestown, of which he had formed the plan. My poor cousin, too, died in the Prussian service; thus my aunt lost, nearly at the same period, her son and husband. These losses reanimated in some measure her affection for the nearest relative she had remaining, which was myself. When I went to Geneva, I made her house my home, and amused myself with rummaging and turning over the books and papers my uncle had left. Among them I found some curious ones, and some letters of the importance of which they had little knowledge. My aunt, who set no store by these dusty papers, would willingly have given the whole to me, but I contented myself with two or three books, with notes written by the Minister Bernard, my grandfather, and among the rest the posthumous works of Rohault, in quarto, the margins of which were full of excellent commentaries, which gave me an inclination to mathematics. This book remained among those of Madame de Warens, and I have ever since lamented that I did not preserve it. To these I added five or six *mémoires* in manuscript, and a printed one, composed by the famous Micheli Ducret, a man



of great talent, learned and enlightened, but too much inclined to political agitation, for which he was cruelly treated by the magistrates of Geneva, and lately died in the fortress of Arberg, where he had been confined many years, for being, as it was said, concerned in the conspiracy of Berne.

This *mémoire* was a judicious critique on the extensive but ridiculous plan of fortification which had been partially carried out at Geneva, though laughed at by every person of judgment in the art who was unacquainted with the secret motives of the Council in the execution of this magnificent enterprise. Monsieur Micheli, who had been excluded from the committee of fortification for having condemned this plan, thought that, as a citizen and a member of the Two Hundred, he might give his advice at large, and therefore did so in this *mémoire*, which he was imprudent enough to have printed, though he never published it, having only those copies struck off which were meant for the Two Hundred, and which were all intercepted at the post-office by order of the minor Council. I found this *mémoire* among my uncle's papers, with the answer he had been ordered to make to it, and took both. This was soon after I had left my place at the survey, and I yet remained on good terms with the Advocate Coccoilli, who had the management of it. Some time after, the director of the custom-house entreated me to stand godfather to his child, with Madame Coccoilli, who was to be godmother. Proud of being placed on such terms of equality with the Advocate, I strove to assume importance, and show myself worthy of that honor.

Full of this idea, I thought I could do nothing better than show him Micheli's *mémoire* in print, which was really a

scarce piece, and would prove I was connected with people of consequence in Geneva, who were entrusted with the secrets of the State; yet, by a kind of reserve which I should find it difficult to account for, I did not show him my uncle's answer, perhaps because it was manuscript, and nothing less than print was worthy to approach the Advocate. He understood, however, so well the importance of this paper, which I had the folly to put into his hands, that I could never after get it into my possession, and being convinced that every effort for that purpose would be ineffectual, I made a merit of my forbearance, transforming the theft into a present. I made no doubt that this writing—more curious, however, than useful—answered his purpose at the Court of Turin, where probably he took care to be reimbursed in some way or other for the expense which the acquisition of it might be supposed to have cost him. Happily, of all future contingencies, the least probable is that the King of Sardinia should ever besiege Geneva; but, as that event is not absolutely impossible, I shall ever reproach my foolish vanity with having been the means of pointing out the greatest defects of that city to its most ancient enemy.

I passed three or four years in this manner, between music, magistery, projects, and journeys, floating incessantly from one object to another, and wishing to fix myself, though I knew not on what, but insensibly inclining towards study. I was acquainted with men of letters, I had heard them speak of literature, and sometimes mingled in the conversation, yet rather adopted the jargon of books than the knowledge they contained. In my excursions to Geneva I frequently called on my good old friend Monsieur Simon, who greatly promoted

my rising emulation by fresh news from the republic of letters, extracted from Baillet or Colomiés. I frequently saw, too, at Chambéri, a Dominican professor of physic, a good kind of friar, whose name I have forgotten, who often made little chemical experiments, which greatly amused me. In imitation of him, and aided by Ozanam's *Récréations Mathématiques*, I attempted to make some sympathetic ink; and having for that purpose more than half filled a bottle with quicklime, orpiment, and water, I corked it tightly. The effervescence immediately became extremely violent; I ran to unstop the bottle, but had not time to effect it, for during the attempt it burst in my face like a bomb, and I swallowed so much of the orpiment and lime that it nearly cost me my life. I remained blind for six weeks, and by the event of this experiment learned to meddle no more with experimental chemistry while its elements were unknown to me.

This adventure happened very unluckily for my health, which, for some time past, had been visibly on the decline. This was rather extraordinary, as I was guilty of no kind of excess; nor could it have been expected from my make, for my chest, being well formed and rather capacious, seemed to give my lungs full liberty to play; yet I was short-breathed, felt a very sensible oppression, sighed involuntarily, had palpitations of the heart and spitting of blood, accompanied with a low fever, which I have never since entirely overcome. How is it possible to fall into such a state in the flower of one's age, without any inward decay, or without having done anything to destroy health?

It is sometimes said that the sword wears the scabbard; this was truly the case with me. The violence of my passions

both kept me alive and hastened my dissolution. What passions? will be asked. Mere nothings; the most trivial objects in nature, but which affected me as forcibly as if the acquisition of a Helen, or of the throne of the universe, were at stake. In the first place, women. Possessed of one, my senses were satisfied—my heart, never. Extreme longings devoured me even in the moment of fruition. I had a tender mother, a cherished friend, but sighed for a mistress; my fancy painted her as such, and gave her a thousand forms, that I might deceive myself. Had I believed that I was holding Mamma in my embrace when I really did so, I should not have clasped her less warmly, but my sensual desires would have vanished. I should have sobbed with tenderness, but enjoyment would have been lacking. Enjoyment! Is man formed to taste it? Ah! if it had ever in my life been granted that but for a moment only I was to experience the full delights of love, I cannot conceive that my frail being could endure the trial; I should expire at the supreme moment.

I was therefore dying for love without an object, and this condition, perhaps, is, of all others, the most dangerous. I was likewise uneasy—tormented at the bad state of poor Mamma's circumstances, and the imprudence of her conduct, which could not fail to bring her in a short time to total ruin. My tortured imagination, which ever foreruns misfortunes, continually beheld this in its utmost excess, and in all its consequences. I already saw myself forced by want to quit her to whom I had consecrated my future life, and without whom I could not hope for happiness. Thus was my soul continually agitated; longings and fears devoured me alternately.



Music was a passion less turbulent, but no less consuming, from the ardor with which I attached myself to it; by the persistent study of the obscure books of Rameau; by an invincible resolution to charge my memory with rules it could not retain; by continual application, and by vast compilations which I frequently passed whole nights in copying. But why dwell on these particularly, while every folly that took possession of my wandering brain, the most transient ideas of a single day—a journey, a concert, a supper, a walk, a novel to read, a play to see, things in the world the least premeditated in my pleasures or occupation—became for me the most violent passions, which, by their ridiculous impetuosity, inflicted the most serious torments? Even the imaginary misfortunes of Cleveland, read with avidity and frequent interruption, have, I am persuaded, disordered me more than my own.

There was a Genevese, named Bagueret, who had been employed under Peter the Great, at the Court of Russia, one of the most worthless, senseless fellows I ever met with, full of projects as foolish as himself, which were to rain down millions, but if they came to nothing he was in no way disconcerted. This man, having come to Chambéri on account of some suit pending before the Senate, immediately sought acquaintance with Mamma, and with great reason on his side, since, for those imaginary trifles which he bestowed with prodigality, he gained in exchange the unfortunate crown-pieces, one by one, out of her pocket. I did not like him, and he plainly perceived this, for with me it is not a very difficult discovery, nor did he spare any sort of meanness to gain my good-will, and, among other things, proposed teaching me to play at chess, of which game he understood something.

I made an attempt, though almost against my inclination, and, after several efforts, having learned the elements of the game, my progress was so rapid that before the end of the first sitting I gave him the defeat which in the beginning he had given me. Nothing more was necessary; behold me fascinated with chess! I buy a board and the treatise of "*Le Calabrois*," and, shutting myself up in my chamber, pass whole days and nights in studying all the varieties of the game, being determined, by playing alone without end or relaxation, to drive them into my head in spite of myself. After incredible efforts, during two or three months passed in this curious employment, I go to the coffee-house, thin, sallow, and almost stupid. I seat myself, and again attack Monsieur Bagueret. He beats me once, twice, twenty times; so many combinations were fermenting in my head, and my imagination was so stupefied, that all appeared confusion. I tried to exercise myself with Philidor's or Stamma's book of instructions, but I was still equally perplexed, and, having exhausted myself with fatigue, was further to seek than ever, and, whether I abandoned my chess for a time, or resolved to revive my knowledge by unremitted practice, it was the same thing. I could never advance one step beyond the improvement of the first sitting, and always returned in a circle to where I had begun. I should practise for countless ages, with the result of being able to win a game from Bagueret—no more. "A fine employment of your time!" the reader will say. And not a little time have I so employed. My first endeavors ceased only because I had not strength of mind and body to continue them. When I left my room I had the air of one arisen from the grave, and, if this course of life had lasted, I

should not have been long among the living. It will be acknowledged that it would be strange, especially in respect of one like me, in the ardor of youth, that so active a brain could coincide with a healthy constitution.

The alteration of my brain had an effect on my temper, moderating the ardor of my fantasies, for as I grew weaker they became more tranquil, and I even lost, in some measure, my rage for traveling. I was not seized with heaviness, but melancholy; vapors succeeded passions, languor became sorrow. I wept and sighed without cause, and felt my life ebbing away before I had enjoyed it. I trembled to think of the perilous situation in which I should leave my poor Mamma; and I can truly say that quitting her, and leaving her in these melancholy circumstances, was my only concern. At length I fell quite ill, and was nursed by her as never mother nursed a child. The care she took of me was of real utility to her affairs, since it diverted her mind from schemes, and kept projectors at a distance. How pleasing would death have been at that time, when, if I had not tasted many of the pleasures of life, I had felt but few of its misfortunes! My tranquil soul would have taken its flight, without having experienced those cruel ideas of the injustice of mankind which embitter both life and death. I should have enjoyed the sweet consolation that I still survived in the dearer part of myself. It could hardly have been called death; and had I been divested of my uneasiness on her account, it would have appeared but a gentle sleep; yet even these disquietudes had such an affectionate and tender turn, that their bitterness was tempered by a pleasing sensibility. I said to her, "You are the depository of my whole being; act so that I may be







Maurice Leloir inv

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happy." Two or three times, when my disorder was violent, I crept to her apartment to give her my advice respecting her conduct: and I dare affirm that these admonitions were both wise and equitable, the interest I took in her future concerns being most strongly marked. As if tears had been both nourishment and medicine, I found myself the better for those I shed with her, while seated on her bedside, and holding her hands between mine. The hours crept insensibly away in these nocturnal discourses. I returned to my chamber better than I had quitted it, being satisfied and calmed by the promises she made, and the hopes with which she had inspired me. I slept on them with my heart at peace, and fully resigned to the dispensations of Providence. God grant, after having had so many reasons to hate life, after being agitated with so many storms, after it has even become a burden, that death, which must terminate all, may be no more terrible than it would have been at that moment.

By inconceivable care and vigilance she saved my life; and I am convinced that she alone could have done this. I have little faith in the skill of physicians, but rely greatly on the assistance of real friends, and am persuaded that being easy in those particulars on which our happiness depends is more salutary than any other application. If there is a sensation in life peculiarly delightful, we experienced it in being restored to each other; our mutual attachment did not increase, for that was impossible, but it became, I know not how, more intimately tender in its utter simplicity. I became a creature formed by her, wholly her child—more so than if she had been my veritable mother; we got into the habit, though without design, of being continually with each other,



and enjoying, in some measure, our whole existence together, feeling reciprocally that we were not only necessary, but entirely sufficient for each other's happiness. Accustomed to think of no subject foreign to ourselves, our happiness and all our desires were confined to that pleasing and singular union, which perhaps has had no equal, which is not, as I have before observed, love, but a sentiment more essential, depending neither on the senses, sex, age, or figure, but closely related to all that composes our rational existence, and which can cease only with our being.

How was it that this delightful crisis did not secure our mutual felicity for the remainder of her life and mine? I have the consoling conviction that it was not my fault, neither was it hers—at least not willfully. It was decreed that invincible nature was soon to regain its empire. But this fatal return was not suddenly accomplished: there was, thank Heaven, a short but precious interval, that did not conclude by my fault, and which I cannot reproach myself with having employed amiss.

Though recovered from my dangerous illness, I did not regain my strength; my chest was weak, some remains of the fever kept me in a languishing condition, and the only inclination I had was to end my days near one so truly dear to me; to confirm her in those good resolutions she had formed; to convince her in what consisted the real charms of a happy life, and, as far as depended on me, to render hers so; but I foresaw that in a gloomy, melancholy house, the continual solitude of our own society would at length become too dull and monotonous. A remedy presented itself: Mamma had prescribed milk for me, and insisted that I should take it in

the country. I consented, provided she would accompany me : nothing more was necessary to gain her compliance, and whither we should go was all that remained to be determined on. Our suburban garden was not properly in the country, being surrounded by houses and other gardens, and possessing none of those attractions so desirable in a rural retreat ; besides, after the death of Anet, we had given up that place from economical principles, feeling no longer a desire to rear plants, and other views making us not regret the loss of that little retreat.

Taking advantage of the distaste I found she began to conceive for the town, I proposed to abandon it entirely, and settle ourselves in an agreeable solitude, in some small house, distant enough from the city to avoid the importunity of idle visitors. She was ready to follow my advice, and this plan, which her good angel and mine suggested, might fully have secured our happiness and tranquillity till death had divided us ; but this was not the state we were appointed to. Mamma was destined to endure all the sorrows of indigence and discomfort, after having passed her life in abundance, that she might learn to quit it with the less regret ; and I myself, by an assemblage of misfortunes of all kinds, was to become a striking example to him who, inspired with a love of justice and the public good, and trusting implicitly to his own innocence, shall openly dare to assert truth to mankind, unsupported by cabals, or without having formed parties to protect himself.

An unhappy fear restrained her : she did not dare to quit her ill-contrived house, for fear of displeasing the proprietor. "Your proposed retirement is charming," said she,

"and much to my taste, but in our retreat we need maintenance. In quitting this dungeon, I hazard losing the very means of life, and, when these fail us in the woods, we must again return to seek them in the town. That we may have the least possible cause for being reduced to this point, let us not leave our house entirely, but pay this small pension to the Comte de Saint-Laurent, that he may suffer mine to continue. Let us seek some little habitation, far enough from the town to be at peace, yet near enough to return when obliged to do so." This mode was finally adopted; and, after some small search, we fixed on Les Charmettes, on an estate belonging to Monsieur de Conzié, at a very small distance from Chambéri; but as retired and solitary as if it had been a hundred leagues off. The spot we had concluded on is a valley, between two tolerably high hills, which run north and south; at the bottom, among the trees and pebbles, flows a rivulet, and halfway up the ascent, on either side, are scattered a number of houses, forming a beautiful retreat for those who love a peaceful, romantic asylum. After having examined two or three of these houses, we chose that which we thought the most pleasing, which was the property of a gentleman of the army, called Monsieur Noiret. This house was in good condition: before it a terrace garden; below that, on the declivity, an orchard; and on the slope behind the house, a vineyard; a little wood of chestnut-trees opposite; a fountain hard by, and higher up the hill meadows for the cattle;—in short, all that could be thought necessary for the country retirement we proposed to establish. To the best of my remembrance we took possession of it towards the latter end of the summer of 1736. I was transported with delight when we retired to

rest there for the first time. "O Mamma!" said I to this dear friend, embracing her with tears of tenderness and joy, "this is the abode of happiness and innocence; if we do not find them here in each other's society, it will be in vain to seek them elsewhere."

*8 P.M. Monday, Dec. 11, 1922. Cool. snow or ice.*  
*P. " Friday, Jan. 18, 1924. Mild. clear. clearing.*





BOOK SIX





# THE CONFESSIONS OF JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU

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BOOK VI—FIRST PERIOD

[1736]



OC erat in votis : modus agri non ita magnus,  
Hortus ubi, et tecto vicinus jugis aquæ fons ;  
Et paulùm sylvæ super his foret.

I cannot add—

Auctius atque

Dî melius fecere ;

but no matter, the former is enough ; I had no occasion to have any property there, it was sufficient that I enjoyed it ;



for I have long since both said and felt that the proprietor and possessor are often two very different people, even leaving husbands and lovers out of the question.

Here begins the short happiness of my life, those peaceful and happy moments which have given me the right to say that I have lived. Precious and ever-regretted moments! Ah! recommence your delightful course; pass more slowly through my memory, if possible, than you actually did in your fugitive succession. How shall I prolong, according to my inclination, this recital, at once so pleasing and simple? How shall I continue to relate the same occurrences, without wearying my readers with the repetition, any more than I was satiated with the enjoyment? Again, if all this consisted of facts, actions, or words, I could somehow or other convey an idea of it; but how shall I describe what was neither said nor done, nor even thought, but felt and enjoyed, without being able to particularize any other object of my happiness than the bare idea? I rose with the sun, and was happy; I walked, and was happy; I saw Mamma, and was happy; I quitted her, and still was happy! Whether I rambled through the woods, over the hills, or strolled along the valley; read, was idle, worked in the garden, gathered fruits, or assisted in household duties, happiness continually accompanied me; it was fixed on no assignable object; it was within me, nor could I depart from it a single moment.

Nothing that passed during that charming epoch, nothing that I did, said, or thought, has escaped my memory. The time that preceded or followed it I only recollect by intervals, unequal and confused; but here I remember all as distinctly as if it existed at this moment. Imagination, which in my





Maurice Leloir

Maurice Leloir inv.

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young man, anticipating the future, but now takes  
 a retrospective view, looking back upon the past  
 with a sense of its transience and its insignificance.  
 I can see nothing in the future that can tempt my  
 imagination, and I am now looking back upon the  
 remembrance of the period I am now describing  
 as the most interesting and the most valuable  
 of my misfortunes.

It was on the 10th of June I shall relate the exact date  
 and give some idea of their force and precision. The first  
 day we went to the garden at 10 o'clock, and the day being  
 warm and the wind rather heavy, we were carried in a chair  
 about a quarter of a foot. Feeling the chamberlain would be  
 surprised to see me about 10 o'clock, desiring to walk the garden  
 as we passed along the way, I saw a small plant in the bed,  
 and said, "There's some periwinkle in flower yet!" I had  
 never seen any before, nor did I stop to examine this. The  
 night is too short to distinguish plants on the ground, and I  
 never cast a look at this as I passed. An interval of nearly  
 forty years had elapsed before I saw any more periwinkle  
 and as soon as I observed it, when, being at Orléans, in 1764,  
 with my friend Monsieur de Peyron, we went up to the  
 garden, in the garden of which there was a pretty building  
 which is now called Belle-Vue. I was then engaged in  
 the garden. Walking and looking at the garden, I observed  
 with surprise, "Ah! there's some periwinkle in flower yet!"  
 It was.

The Peyron, who perceived my mistake, was looking at  
 the house, but will never say he observed it. I have no memory  
 of it. The reader may judge of the mistake, and of the





Wm. L. L.

youth was perpetually anticipating the future, but now takes a retrograde course, makes some amends by these charming recollections for the deprivation of hope, which I have lost for ever. I no longer see anything in the future that can tempt my wishes; it is a recollection of the past alone that can flatter me, and the remembrance of the period I am now describing is so true and lively that it sometimes makes me happy, even in spite of my misfortunes.

Of these recollections I shall relate one example, which may give some idea of their force and precision. The first day we went to sleep at Les Charmettes, the way being up-hill, and Mamma rather heavy, she was carried in a chair, while I followed on foot. Fearing the chairmen would be fatigued, she got out about half-way, designing to walk the rest. As we passed along she saw something blue in the hedge, and said, "There's some periwinkle in flower yet!" I had never seen any before, nor did I stoop to examine this: my sight is too short to distinguish plants on the ground, and I only cast a look at this as I passed. An interval of nearly thirty years had elapsed before I saw any more periwinkle, at least before I observed it, when, being at Cressier, in 1764, with my friend Monsieur du Peyrou, we went up a small mountain, on the summit of which he has a pretty building which he rightly calls Belle-Vue. I was then beginning to herborize. Walking and looking among the bushes, I exclaimed with rapture, "Ah! there's some periwinkle!"—such, indeed, it was.

Du Peyrou, who perceived my transport, was ignorant of the cause, but will some day be informed, I hope, on reading this. The reader may judge by this impression, made by so

small an incident, what an effect must have been produced by every occurrence of that time.

Meantime, the air of the country did not restore my health. I was languishing, and became more so. I could not endure milk, and was obliged to discontinue the use of it. Water was at this time the fashionable remedy for every complaint; accordingly I entered on a course of it, and so indiscreetly that it almost released me, not only from my illness, but also from my life. Every morning on rising I went to the spring, carrying a large goblet, from which, while walking to and fro, I imbibed as much as would fill a couple of wine-bottles. I abstained altogether from wine at meal-times. The water I drank was rather hard and difficult to pass, as mountain water generally is; in short, I managed so well, that in the course of two months I totally ruined my stomach, which until then had been very good, and, no longer digesting anything properly, had no reason to expect a cure. At this time an accident happened, as singular in itself as in its subsequent consequences, which can only terminate with my existence.

One morning, being no worse than usual, while putting up the leaf of a small table, I felt a sudden and almost inconceivable revolution throughout my whole frame. I know not how to describe it better than as a kind of tempest, which suddenly rose in my blood, and spread in a moment over every part of my body. My arteries began beating so violently that I not only felt their motion, but even heard it, particularly that of the carotids, attended by a loud noise in my ears, which was of three, or rather four, distinct kinds. For instance, first a grave, hollow buzzing; then a more distinct murmur,

like the running of water; then an extremely sharp hissing, attended by the beating I have mentioned, and whose throbs I could easily count, without feeling my pulse, or putting a hand to any part of my body. This internal tumult was so violent that it destroyed my former acuteness of hearing, and rendered me henceforth not wholly, but partially deaf.

My surprise and fear may easily be conceived. Imagining it was the stroke of death, I went to bed, and, the physician being sent for, I related my case, trembling with apprehension, and judging myself past all cure. I believe the doctor was of the same opinion; however, he performed his office, running over a long string of causes and effects beyond my comprehension, after which, in consequence of this sublime theory, he set about, *in anima vili*, the experimental part of his art; but the means he was pleased to adopt in order to effect a cure were so troublesome, disgusting, and inoperative that I soon discontinued them, and after some weeks, finding I was neither better nor worse, left my bed and returned to my usual mode of living; but the beating in my arteries and the buzzing in my ears have never quitted me for a moment during the thirty years which have elapsed since that time.

Till then I had been a great sleeper, but a total deprivation of repose, with other alarming symptoms which have accompanied it, even to this time, persuaded me I had but a short time to live. This idea tranquilized me for a time. I became less anxious about a cure, and, being persuaded I could not prolong life, determined to employ the remainder of it as usefully as possible. This was practicable by a particular indulgence of nature, which, in this melancholy state, exempted me from sufferings which it might have been supposed I



should have experienced. I was incommoded by the noise, but felt no pain, nor was it accompanied by any habitual inconvenience, except nocturnal wakefulness, and at all times a shortness of breath, which is not violent enough to be called an asthma, but was troublesome when I attempted to run, or use any degree of exertion.

This accident, which seemed to threaten the dissolution of my body, only killed my passions, and I have reason to thank Heaven for the happy effect produced by it on my soul. I can truly say I only began to live when I considered myself dead; for, estimating at their real value those things I was quitting, I began to employ myself on nobler objects, namely, by anticipating those I hoped shortly to have the contemplation of, and which hitherto I had too much neglected. I had often made light of religion, but was never totally devoid of it; consequently, it cost me less pain to employ my thoughts on that subject, which is generally thought melancholy, though highly pleasing to those who make it an object of hope and consolation. Mamma was more useful to me on this occasion than all the theologians in the world could have been.

She, who brought everything into a system, had not failed to do as much by religion; and this system was composed of ideas that bore no affinity to each other. Some were extremely good, and others very ridiculous, being made up of sentiments proceeding from her disposition, and prejudices derived from education. Believers, in general, make God like themselves: the virtuous make Him good, and the profligate make Him wicked; ill-tempered and bilious devotees see nothing but hell, because they would willingly damn all man-

kind; while loving and gentle souls would fain disbelieve it altogether; and one of the astonishments I can never overcome is to see the good Fénelon speak of it in his *Télémaque* as if he really gave credit to it; but I hope he lied in that particular, for, however strict he might be with regard to truth, a bishop absolutely must lie sometimes. Mamma lied not while expressing her opinion to me, and that soul without gall, who could not imagine a revengeful and ever-angry God, saw only clemency and forgiveness where devotees beheld justice and punishment. She frequently said there would be no justice in God should He be strictly just to us; because, not having bestowed what was necessary to render us essentially good, it would be requiring more than He had given. A whimsical idea of hers was that, not believing in hell, she was firmly persuaded of the reality of purgatory. This arose from her not knowing what to do with the wicked, being loath to damn them utterly, nor yet caring to place them with the good till they had become so; and we must really allow that, both in this world and the next, the wicked are very troublesome company.

Another extravagance:—It is seen that the doctrine of original sin and redemption of mankind is destroyed by this system; consequently that the basis of Christianity, as generally received, is shaken, and that the Catholic faith at any rate cannot subsist with these principles. Mamma, notwithstanding, was a good Catholic, or, at least, professed to be one, and certainly desired to become such; but it appeared to her that the Scriptures were too literally and harshly explained, supposing that all we read of everlasting torments were figurative threatenings, and the death of Jesus Christ an

example of charity, truly divine, which should teach mankind to love God and each other. In a word, faithful to the religion she had embraced, she acquiesced in all its professions of faith, but, on a discussion of each particular article, it was plain that her ideas were quite opposed to that Church whose doctrines she professed to believe. In these cases she exhibited simplicity of heart, a frankness more eloquent than sophistry, which frequently embarrassed her confessor—for she disguised nothing from him. “I am a good Catholic,” she would say, “and will ever remain so. I adopt with all the powers of my soul the decisions of our holy Mother Church; I am not mistress of my faith, but I am of my will, which I submit to you without reserve; I will endeavor to believe all—what can you require more?”

Had there been no Christian morality established, I am persuaded she would have lived as if regulated by its principles, so perfectly did they seem to accord with her disposition. She did everything that was required; and she would have done the same had there been no such requisition. In things indifferent she was fond of obeying, and had she been permitted—had she even been prescribed—to eat meat, she would have fasted between God and herself, without prudence having aught to do with the matter. But all this morality was subordinate to the principles of M. de Tavel, or rather she pretended to see nothing in religion that contradicted them; thus she would have bestowed her favors on twenty men in a day, without any idea of a crime, her conscience being no more moved in that particular than her passions. I know that a number of devotees are not more scrupulous, but the difference is, they are seduced by their passions, she was

blinded by her sophisms. In the midst of conversations the most affecting, I might say the most edifying, she would touch on this subject without any change of air or manner, and without being sensible of any contradiction in her opinions. She would have even interrupted her discourse to exchange words for deeds, and resumed it with the former serenity, so much was she persuaded that the whole was only a maxim of social order, and that any person of sense might honestly interpret, apply, or make exceptions, without any danger of offending the Almighty. Though I was far enough from being of the same opinion in this particular, I confess I dared not combat hers; being ashamed of the very ungallant part I must have acted in support of my argument. I should have been glad to establish these rules for others, and excepted myself, but, besides that her constitution sufficiently prevented the abuse of her notions, I know she did not easily change her mind, and that claiming an exception for myself was claiming it for all those who pleased her. For the rest, I add here this inconsequence with others, though it never had any great influence on her conduct, and, at the time I am speaking of, none; but I have promised faithfully to describe her principles, and I will perform my engagement. I now return to myself.

Finding in her all those ideas I had occasion for to secure me from the fears of death and its future consequences, I drew confidence and security from this source; my attachment became more warm than ever, and I would willingly have transmitted to her my whole existence, which seemed ready to abandon me. From this redoubled attachment, a persuasion that I had but a short time to live, and profound security



as to my future state, arose an habitual and even pleasing serenity, which, calming every passion that extends our hopes and fears, suffered me to enjoy without inquietude or concern the few days which I imagined remained for me. What contributed to render them still more agreeable was an endeavor to encourage her rising taste for the country by every amusement I could devise. Seeking to attach her to her garden, poultry, pigeons, and cows, I amused myself with them; and these little occupations, which employed my time without injuring my tranquillity, were more serviceable than a milk diet, or all the remedies bestowed on my poor shattered body, even to effecting the utmost possible re-establishment of it.

The vintage and gathering in our fruit employed the remainder of the year; we became more and more attached to a rustic life, and the society of our honest neighbors. We saw the approach of winter with regret, and returned to the city as if going into exile. To me this change was particularly gloomy, never expecting to see the return of spring, and thinking I took an everlasting leave of *Les Charmettes*. I did not leave it without kissing the very earth and trees, and casting back many a wistful look. Having left my scholars for so long a time, and lost my relish for company and the amusements of the town, I seldom went out, conversing only with Mamma and a Monsieur Salomon, who had lately become our physician. He was an honest man, of good understanding, a great Cartesian, spoke tolerably well on the system of the world, and his agreeable and instructive conversations were more serviceable than his prescriptions. I could never bear that foolish, trivial mode of conversation which is so generally adopted; but useful, instructive discourse has always

given me great pleasure, nor was I ever backward to join in it. I was much pleased with that of Monsieur Salomon; it appeared to me that when in his company I anticipated the acquisition of that sublime knowledge which my soul would enjoy when freed from its mortal fetters. The inclination I had for him extended to the subjects which he treated on, and I began to look after books which might better enable me to understand his discourse. Those which mingled devotion with science were most agreeable to me, particularly those of the Oratoire and of Port-Royal. I began to read, or rather to devour them. There fell into my hands one written by Père Lamy, called *Entretiens sur les Sciences*, which was a kind of introduction to the knowledge of those books it treated of. I read it over a hundred times, and resolved to make this my guide. In short, I found myself irresistibly drawn, in spite of—or rather by—my ill state of health, towards study, and though looking on each day as the last of my life, read with as much avidity as if certain I was to live for ever. I was assured that reading would injure me; but, on the contrary, I am rather inclined to think it was serviceable, not only to my soul, but also to my body; for this application, which soon became delightful, diverted my thoughts from my disorders, and I soon found myself less affected by them. It is certain, however, that nothing gave me absolute ease; but, having no longer any acute pain, I became accustomed to languishment and wakefulness—to thinking instead of acting; in short, I looked on the gradual and slow decay of my body as inevitably progressive, and only to be terminated by death.

This opinion not only detached me from all the vain cares of life, but delivered me from the importunity of medi-

cine, to which hitherto I had been forced to submit against my will. Salomon, convinced that his drugs were unavailing, spared me the disagreeable task of taking them, and contented himself with amusing the grief of my poor Mamma by some of those harmless preparations which serve to flatter the hopes of the patient, and keep up the credit of the doctor. I discontinued the strict regimen I had latterly observed, resumed the use of wine, and lived in every respect like a man in perfect health, as far as my strength would permit, very soberly, but not abstinently. I even began to go out and visit my acquaintances, particularly Monsieur de Conzié, whose conversation was extremely pleasing to me. Whether it struck me as heroic to study to my last hour, or that some hopes of life still lingered in the bottom of my heart, I cannot tell, but the apparent certainty of death, far from relaxing my inclination for improvement, seemed to animate it, and I hastened to acquire knowledge for the other world, as if convinced I should only possess what I could carry with me. I took a liking to the shop of a bookseller, named Bouchard, which was frequented by some men of letters, and as the spring, whose return I had never expected to see again, was approaching, furnished myself with some books for Les Charmettes, in case I should have the happiness to return there.

I had that happiness, and enjoyed it to the utmost extent. The rapture with which I saw the trees disclose their first buds is inexpressible! The return of spring seemed to me like rising from the grave into Paradise. The snow was hardly off the ground when we left our dungeon and returned to Les Charmettes, to enjoy the first warblings of the nightingale. I now thought no more of dying, and it is really







Maurice Leloir  
Maurice Leloir inv.

Boulard fils sc.

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my strength would permit, and conceived a real grief at  
not being able to manage our garden without help; for I could  
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redoubled, and the blood flew with such violence

#### In the Garden at The Charmettes

; nor could I appear in the garden or the courtyard

I have ever taken great pleasure in taming animals,  
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I took care never to abuse, wishing them to love me freely.

I have already mentioned that I carried back some birds  
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singular that from this time I never experienced any dangerous illness in the country. I have suffered greatly, but never kept my bed, and have often said to those about me, on finding myself worse than ordinary, "Should you see me at the point of death, carry me under the shade of an oak, and I promise you I shall recover."

Though weak, I resumed my country occupations, as far as my strength would permit, and conceived a real grief at not being able to manage our garden without help; for I could not take five or six strokes with the spade without being out of breath and overcome with perspiration. When I stooped, the beating redoubled, and the blood flew with such violence to my head that I was instantly obliged to stand upright. Being, therefore, confined to less fatiguing employments, I busied myself about the dove-house, and was so pleased with it that I sometimes passed several hours there without feeling a moment's weariness. Pigeons are very timid and difficult to tame, yet I inspired mine with so much confidence that they followed me everywhere, letting me catch them at pleasure; nor could I appear in the garden or the courtyard without two or three on my arms or head in an instant, and, notwithstanding the pleasure I took in them, their company became so troublesome that I was obliged to lessen the familiarity. I have ever taken great pleasure in taming animals, particularly those that are wild and fearful. It appeared delightful to me to inspire them with a confidence which I took care never to abuse, wishing them to love me freely.

I have already mentioned that I carried back some books. I did not forget to read them, but in a manner more proper to fatigue than instruct me. I wrongly imagined that, to read



a book profitably, it was necessary to be acquainted with every branch of knowledge it even mentioned; far from thinking that the author had not so much knowledge himself, but drew assistance from other books, as he might see occasion. Full of this silly idea, I was stopped every moment, obliged to run from one book to another, and sometimes, before I could read the tenth page of that I was studying, found myself called upon to exhaust whole libraries. I was so attached to this ridiculous method that I lost a prodigious deal of time, and had bewildered my head to such a degree that I was hardly capable of doing, seeing, or comprehending anything. I fortunately perceived, at length, that I was on the wrong road, which would entangle me in an inextricable labyrinth, and quitted it before I was irrevocably lost.

When a person has any real taste for the sciences, the first thing he perceives in the pursuit of them is that connection by which they mutually attract, assist, and enlighten each other, and that it is impossible to attain one without the assistance of the rest. Though the human understanding cannot grasp all, and one must ever be regarded as the principal object, yet, if the rest be totally neglected, the chosen study is often veiled in obscurity. I was convinced that my resolution was good and useful in itself, but that it was necessary I should change my method; I therefore had recourse to the *Encyclopédie*. I began by dividing the knowledge contained therein into its various branches, but soon discovered that I must pursue a contrary course, that I must take each separately, and trace it to that point where it united with the rest; thus I returned to the general synthetical method, but returned thither with a conviction that I was going right.

Meditation supplied the want of knowledge, and a very natural reflection gave strength to my resolution, which was that, whether I lived or died, I had no time to lose; to know nothing before the age of five-and-twenty, and then resolve to learn everything, was engaging to employ the future time profitably. I was ignorant at what point accident or death might put a period to my endeavors, and resolved at all events to acquire with the utmost expedition some idea of every species of knowledge, as well to try my natural disposition as to judge for myself what most deserved cultivation.

In the execution of my plan I experienced another advantage, of which I had never thought: this was, spending a great deal of time profitably. Nature certainly never meant me for study, since attentive application fatigues me so much that I find it impossible to employ myself half an hour together intently on one subject, particularly while following another person's ideas, for it has frequently happened that I have pursued my own for a much longer period with success. After reading a few pages of an author who must be followed with close application, my understanding wanders and I become lost in the clouds, and should I obstinately continue, I tire myself to no purpose, I am dazzled and am no longer conscious of what I read; but in a succession of various subjects, one relieves me from the fatigue of the other, and without finding respite necessary I can follow them with pleasure. I took advantage of this observation in the plan of my studies, taking care to intermingle them in such a manner that I was never weary. It is true that domestic and rural concerns furnished many pleasing relaxations; but, as my

eagerness for improvement increased, I contrived to find in these opportunities for my studies, frequently employing myself about two things at the same time, without reflecting that both were ill done.

In relating so many trifling details—which delight me, but frequently tire my reader—I make use of a discretion which he would hardly suspect if I did not take care to inform him of it. For example, I recollect with pleasure all the different methods I adopted for the distribution of my time in such a manner as to produce the utmost profit and pleasure. I may say that the portion of my life which I passed in this retirement, though in continual ill-health, was that in which I was least idle and least wearied. Two or three months were thus employed in discovering the bent of my genius; meantime I enjoyed, in the finest season of the year, and in a spot thus rendered delightful, the charms of a life of whose worth I was so highly sensible, a society as free as it was charming—if a union so perfect, and the extensive knowledge I proposed to acquire, can be called society. It seemed to me as if I already possessed the learning I sought after; or better still, since the pleasure of acquisition constituted a great part of my happiness.

I must pass over these beginnings, which were to me the height of enjoyment, but are too trivial to bear repeating. Again I say, true happiness is indescribable—it is only to be felt, and this consciousness of felicity is proportionately more the less able we are to describe it, because it does not result from a concourse of favorable incidents, but is a permanent condition of the mind. I am frequently guilty of repetitions, but should be infinitely more so did I repeat the same thing

as often as it recurs to my mind. When, at length, my variable mode of life was reduced to a more uniform course,<sup>b</sup> the following was nearly the distribution of time which I adopted.

I rose every morning before the sun, and passed through a neighboring orchard into a pleasant path, which, running above the vineyard, led towards Chambéri. While walking, I offered up my prayers—not by a vain motion of the lips, but a sincere elevation of my heart to the Great Author of delightful Nature, whose beauties were spread out before me. I never liked to pray in a chamber; it seems to me that the walls and all the petty workmanship of man interpose themselves between God and myself. I love to contemplate Him in His works, which elevate my soul, and raise my thoughts to Him. My prayers were pure, I can affirm it, and therefore worthy to be heard. I asked for myself, and her from whom my thoughts were never divided, only an innocent and quiet life, exempt from vice, sorrow, and want; I prayed that we might die the death of the just, and partake their lot hereafter. For the rest, it was rather admiration and contemplation than request, being satisfied that the best means to obtain what is necessary from the Giver of every perfect good is rather to deserve than to solicit. Returning from my walk, I lengthened the way by taking a roundabout path, still contemplating with earnestness and delight the beautiful scenes with which I was surrounded—those only objects that never fatigue either the eye or the heart. As I approached our habitation I looked forward to see if Mamma was stirring, and when I perceived her shutters open, I ran with joy towards the house. If they were yet shut, I went into the garden to wait their opening.



amusing myself meantime by a retrospection of what I had read the preceding evening, or by gardening. The moment the shutter was drawn back I hastened to embrace her as she lay, frequently half asleep; and this salute, pure as it was affectionate, possessed from its very innocence a charm which the senses can never bestow.

We usually breakfasted on coffee and milk; this was the time of day when we had most leisure, and when we chatted with the greatest freedom. These sittings, which were usually pretty long, have given me a fondness for breakfasts, and I infinitely prefer those of England, or Switzerland, which are considered as a meal, at which all the family assembles, to those of France, where people breakfast alone in their apartments or more frequently have none at all. After an hour or two passed in discourse, I went to my study till dinner, beginning with some philosophical work, such as the Port-Royal Logic, Locke's *Essays*, Malebranche, Leibnitz, Descartes, etc. I soon found that these authors perpetually contradict each other, and formed the chimerical project of reconciling them, which cost me much labor and loss of time, bewildering my head without any profit. At length, renouncing this idea, I adopted one infinitely more profitable, to which I attribute all the progress I have since made, notwithstanding the defects of my capacity—for it is certain I had very little for study. In reading each author, I restricted myself to following all his ideas, without suffering my own or those of any other writer to interfere with them, or entering into any dispute on their utility. I said to myself, "I will begin by laying up a stock of ideas, true or false, but clearly conceived, till my understanding shall be sufficiently furnished to enable me to compare and

make choice of those that are most estimable." I am sensible that this method is not without its inconveniences, but it succeeded in furnishing me with a fund of instruction. Having passed some years in thinking after others, without reflection, and almost without reasoning, I found myself possessed of sufficient materials to set about thinking on my own account; and when journeys or business deprived me of the opportunity of consulting books, I amused myself with recollecting and comparing what I had read, weighing every opinion in the balance of reason, and frequently judging my masters. Though it was late before I began to exercise my judicial faculties, I have not discovered that they have lost their vigor, and, on publishing my own ideas, have never been accused of being a servile disciple, or of swearing *in verba magistri*.

From these studies I passed to the elements of geometry, for I never went further, forcing my weak memory to retain them by going over the same ground a hundred and a hundred times. I did not admire Euclid, who rather seeks a chain of demonstration than a connection of ideas. I preferred the Geometry of Père Lamy, who from that time became one of my favorite authors, and whose works I yet read with pleasure. Algebra followed, and Père Lamy was still my guide. When I made some progress, I perused Père Reynaud's *Science du Calcul*, and then his *Analyse Démontrée*, to which I did not give much attention. I never went far enough thoroughly to understand the application of algebra to geometry. I was not pleased with this method of performing operations by rule without knowing what I was about: resolving geometrical problems

by the help of equations seemed like playing a tune by turning round a handle. The first time that I found by calculation that the square of a binomial figure was composed of the square of each of its parts, and double the product of one by the other, though convinced that my multiplication was right, I could not be satisfied till I had made and examined the figure; not that I do not admire algebra when applied to abstract quantities, but when used to demonstrate dimensions I wished to see the operation worked out by lines; otherwise I could not rightly comprehend it.

After this came Latin: it was my most painful study, and one in which I never made great progress. I began with the Port-Royal method, but without success. Those barbarous verses sickened me, nor could my ear endure them. I lost myself in a crowd of rules, and, in studying the last, forgot all that preceded it. A study of words is not calculated for a man without memory, and it was principally an endeavor to make my memory more retentive that urged me obstinately to persist in this study, which at length I was obliged to relinquish. As I understood enough to read an easy author by the aid of a dictionary, I followed that method, and found it succeeded tolerably well. I likewise applied myself to translation, not by writing, but mentally, and kept to it. By exercise and perseverance I attained to read Latin authors easily, but have never been able to speak or write that language, which has frequently embarrassed me when I have found myself, I know not by what means, enrolled among men of letters. Another inconvenience that arose from this manner of learning was that I never understood prosody, much less

the rules of versification; yet, anxious to understand the harmony of the language, both in prose and verse, I have made many efforts to attain it, but am convinced that without a master it is almost impossible. Having learned the composition of the hexameter, which is the easiest of all verses, I had the patience to measure out the greater part of Virgil into feet and quantity, and whenever I was dubious whether a syllable was long or short, immediately consulted my Virgil. It may easily be conceived that I ran into many errors in consequence of those licenses permitted by the rules of versification. It is certain that, if there is an advantage in studying alone, there are also great inconveniences and inconceivable labor, as I know better than anyone.

Before noon I quit my books, and, if dinner was not ready, paid my friends the pigeons a visit, or worked in the garden till it was, and when I heard myself called ran very willingly, and with a good appetite, to partake of it, for it is very remarkable that, let me be ever so indisposed, my appetite never fails. We dined very agreeably, chatting till Mamma could eat. Two or three times a week, when it was fine, we drank our coffee in a cool shady arbor behind the house, that I had decorated with hops, and which was very refreshing during the heat; we usually passed an hour in viewing our flowers and vegetables, or in conversation relative to our manner of life, which greatly increased the pleasure of it. I had another little family at the end of the garden; these were several hives of bees, which I never failed to visit once a day, and was frequently accompanied by Mamma. I was greatly interested in their labor, and amused myself in seeing them return from their quest of



booty, their little thighs so loaded that they could hardly walk. At first, curiosity made me indiscreet, and they stung me several times, but afterwards we were so well acquainted that, let me approach as near as I would, they never molested me, though the hives were full and the bees ready to swarm. At these times I have been surrounded, having them on my hands and face without suffering a single sting. All animals are distrustful of man, and with reason; but, when once assured he does not mean to injure them, their confidence becomes so great that he must be worse than a barbarian who abuses it.

After this I returned to my books; but my afternoon employment ought rather to bear the name of recreation and amusement than of labor and study. I have never been able to bear application after dinner, and in general any kind of attention is painful to me during the heat of the day. I employed myself, it is true, but without restraint or rule, and read without studying. What I most attended to at these times was history and geography, and as these did not require attention to disputed points, made as much progress in them as my weak memory would permit. I had an inclination to study Père Pétiau, and launched into the mists of chronology, but was disgusted at the critical part, which I found had neither bottom nor banks; this made me prefer the more exact measurement of time and the course of the celestial bodies. I should even have contracted a fondness for astronomy had I been in possession of instruments, but was obliged to content myself with some of the elements of that art, learned from books, and a few rude observations made with a telescope, sufficient only to give me a general idea of

the situation of the heavenly bodies; for my short sight is insufficient to distinguish the stars without the help of a glass. I recollect an adventure on this subject, the remembrance of which has often diverted me. I had bought a celestial planisphere to study the constellations by, and, having fixed it on a frame, when the nights were fine, and the sky clear, I went into the garden; and fixing the frame on four sticks about as tall as myself, which I drove into the ground, turned the planisphere downwards, and contrived to light it by means of a candle, which I put into a pail to prevent the wind from blowing it out, and then placed it in the centre of the above-mentioned four supports; this done, I examined the stars with my glass, and, from time to time referring to my planisphere, endeavored to distinguish the various constellations. I think I have before observed that Monsieur Noiret's garden was on a terrace; all that was done there was visible from the road. One night some country-people, passing by very late, saw me in a grotesque costume, busily employed in these observations. The light, which struck directly on the planisphere, proceeding from a cause they could not divine, the candle being concealed by the sides of the pail, the four stakes supporting a large paper in a frame, marked over with uncouth figures, with the motion of the telescope, which they saw turning to and fro, gave the whole an air of conjuration that struck them with horror and amazement. My figure was by no means calculated to dispel their fears: a flappet hat put on over my nightcap, and a short wadded cloak about my shoulders, which Mamma had obliged me to put on, presented in their idea the image of a real sorcerer. Being near midnight, they made no doubt but this was the beginning of

some witch's Sabbath; and, having no curiosity to pry further into these mysteries, they fled with all possible speed, awakened their neighbors, and described this most dreadful vision. The story spread so fast that the next day the whole neighborhood was informed that a *sabbat* was held in the garden that belonged to Monsieur Noiret, and I am ignorant what might have been the consequences of this rumor if one of the countrymen who had been witness to my conjurations had not the same day carried his complaint to two Jesuits, who frequently came to visit us, and who, without knowing the foundation of the story, undeceived and satisfied them. These Jesuits told us the whole affair; I acquainted them with the cause of it, and we laughed heartily. However, to obviate future accidents, I resolved for the future to make my observations without light, and consult my planisphere in the house. Those who have read of Venetian magic in my *Lettres de la Montagne*, may find that I long since had the reputation of being a conjurer.

Such was the life I led at Les Charmettes when I had no rural employments, for they ever had the preference, and in those that did not exceed my strength I worked like a peasant; but my extreme weakness left me little merit except good-will; besides, I wished to do two things at once, and therefore did neither well. I obstinately persisted in forcing my memory to retain a good deal by heart, and, for that purpose, I always carried some book with me, which, while at work, I studied and re-studied. I am really amazed that the fatigue of these vain and continual efforts did not end by rendering me entirely stupid. I must have learned and re-learned the Eclogues of Virgil twenty times over, though at this time I cannot recollect a single line of them. I have

lost or spoiled a great number of books by a custom I had of carrying them with me into the dove-house, the garden, orchard, or vineyard, when, being busy about something else, I laid my book at the foot of a tree or on the hedge; wherever it was I forgot to return for it, and often at the end of a fortnight found it rotted to pieces, or eaten by the ants or snails. This ardor for learning became so far a madness that it rendered me almost stupid, and I was perpetually muttering some passage or other to myself.

The writings of Port-Royal, and those of the Oratoire, being what I most read, had made me half a Jansenist, and, notwithstanding all my confidence, their harsh theology sometimes alarmed me. A dread of hell, which till then I had never much apprehended, by little and little disturbed my security, and, had not Mamma tranquilized my soul, would at length have been too much for me. My confessor, who was hers likewise, contributed all in his power to keep me tranquil. This was a Jesuit named Père Hemet, a good and wise old man, whose memory I shall ever hold in veneration. Though a Jesuit, he had the simplicity of a child, and his manners, less relaxed than gentle, were precisely what was necessary to balance the melancholy impressions made on me by Jansenism. This good man and his companion, Père Coppier, came frequently to visit us at Les Charmettes, though the road was very rough and tedious for men of their age. These visits were very comforting to me, which may the Almighty return to their souls, for they were so old that I cannot suppose them yet living. I sometimes went to see them at Chambéri, became acquainted by degrees at their convent, and had free access to the library. The remem-



40 Rm.  
brance of that happy time is so connected with the idea of those Jesuits, that I love one on account of the other, and, though I have ever thought their doctrines dangerous, could never find myself in a disposition to hate them cordially.

I should like to know whether there ever passed such childish notions in the hearts of other men as sometimes do in mine. In the midst of my studies, and of a life as innocent as man could lead, notwithstanding every persuasion to the contrary, the dread of hell frequently tormented me. I asked myself, "What state am I in? Should I die at this instant, must I be damned?" According to my Jansenists the matter was indubitable, but according to my conscience it appeared quite the contrary. Ever terrified and floating in this cruel uncertainty, I had recourse to the most laughable expedients to resolve my doubts, for which I would willingly shut up any man as a lunatic, should I see him practise the same folly. One day, meditating on this melancholy subject, I exercised myself in throwing stones at the trunks of trees, with my usual dexterity, that is to say, without hitting any of them. In the height of this charming exercise, it entered my mind to make a kind of prognostic that might calm my inquietude. I said, "I will throw this stone at the tree facing me; if I hit my mark, I will consider it as a sign of salvation; if I miss, as a token of damnation." While I said this, I threw the stone with a trembling hand and beating heart, but so happily that it fairly struck the body of the tree, which truly was not a difficult matter, for I had taken care to choose one that was very large and very near me. From that moment I have never doubted my salvation. I know not, on recollecting this trait, whether I ought to laugh or shudder at myself. Ye

great geniuses, who surely laugh at my folly, congratulate yourselves on your superior wisdom, but insult not my unhappiness, for I swear to you that I feel it most sensibly.

These troubles, these alarms, inseparable perhaps from devotion, were only at intervals; in general I was tranquil, and the impression made on my soul, by the idea of approaching death, was less that of melancholy than a peaceful languor, which even had its pleasures. I have found among my old papers a kind of congratulation and exhortation which I made to myself on dying at an age when I had the courage to meet death with serenity, without having experienced any great evils, either of body or mind. How right I was in this! A preconception of what I had to suffer made me fear to live, and it seemed that I foresaw the fate which must attend my future days. I have never been so near wisdom as during this happy period, when I felt no great remorse for the past, nor tormenting fear for the future—the reigning sentiment of my soul being the enjoyment of the present. Religious people usually possess a lively sensuality of a minor sort, which makes them highly enjoy those innocent pleasures that are allowed them. Worldlings—I know not why—impute this to them as a crime; or rather, I well know the cause of this imputation: it is because they envy others the enjoyment of those simple delights for which they have lost the relish. I had these inclinations, and found it charming to gratify them in security of conscience. My yet inexperienced heart surrendered itself to all with the calm happiness of a child, or rather, if I dare use the expression, with the raptures of an angel; for in reality these pure delights are as serene as those of paradise. Dinners on the grass at Montagnole,

suppers in our arbor, gathering in the fruits, the vintage, peeling hemp with our servants—all these were so many holidays, in which Mamma took as much pleasure as myself. Solitary walks afforded yet purer pleasure, because in them our hearts expanded with greater freedom: one particularly marks an epoch in my memory; it was on the Day of Saint Louis, whose name Mamma bore. We set out together early and unattended, after having heard a mass at break of day in a chapel adjoining our house, said by a Carmelite, who attended for that purpose. As I proposed walking over the hills opposite our dwelling, which we had not yet visited, we sent our provisions on before, the excursion being likely to last the whole day. Mamma, though rather corpulent, did not walk ill, and we rambled from hill to hill and wood to wood, sometimes in the sun, but oftener in the shade, resting from time to time, and regardless how the hours stole away; speaking of ourselves, of our union, of the sweetness of our lot, and offering up prayers for its duration, which were never granted. Everything conspired to augment our happiness: it had rained recently, there was no dust, the brooks were full and rapid, a gentle breeze agitated the leaves, the air was pure, the horizon free from clouds, serenity reigned in the sky as in our hearts. Our dinner was prepared at a peasant's house, and shared with him and his family, whose benedictions we received. These poor Savoyards—such worthy people! After dinner we regained the shade, and while I was picking up bits of dried sticks to boil our coffee, Mamma amused herself with herborizing among the bushes, and, taking the flowers I had gathered for her in my way, she made me remark in their construction a thousand natural beauties,

which greatly amused me, and which ought to have given me a taste for botany; but the time was not yet come, and my attention was arrested by too many other studies. Besides this, an idea struck me, which diverted my thoughts from flowers and plants: the situation of my mind at that moment, all that we had said or done that day, every object that had struck me, brought to my remembrance the kind of waking dream I had at Annecy seven or eight years before, and of which I have given an account in its place. The similarity was so striking that it affected me even to tears. In a transport of tenderness I embraced this dear friend. "Mamma, Mamma," I exclaimed passionately, "this day has long since been promised me; I can see nothing beyond it: my happiness, by your means, is at its height; may it never decrease! may it continue as long as I am sensible of its value—then it can only finish with my life."

Thus happily passed my days, and the more so since, perceiving nothing that could disturb them, I firmly believed that my happiness could only end with my life; not that the cause of my former uneasiness had absolutely ceased, but I saw it take another course which I directed with my utmost care to useful objects, that the remedy might accompany the evil. Mamma naturally loved the country, and this taste did not cool while with me. By little and little she contracted a fondness for rustic employments, wished to make the most of her land, and had in that particular a knowledge which she practised with pleasure. Not satisfied with what belonged to the house, she hired first a field, then a meadow, transferring her enterprising humor to the objects of agriculture, and, instead of remaining unemployed in the house, was in the way



of becoming a complete farmer. I was not greatly pleased to see this passion increase, and endeavored all I could to oppose it; for I was certain she would be deceived, and that her liberal, extravagant disposition would infallibly carry her expenses beyond her profits. However, I consoled myself by thinking the produce could not be useless, and would, at least, help her to live. Of all the projects she could form, this appeared the least ruinous. Without regarding it, therefore, in the light she did, as a profitable scheme, I considered it as a perpetual employment, which would keep her from ruinous enterprises, and out of the reach of impostors. With this idea, I ardently wished to recover my health and strength, that I might superintend her affairs, overlook her laborers, or rather be the principal one myself. The exercise this naturally obliged me to take, with the relaxation it procured me from books and study, was serviceable to my health.

[1737–1741.] The winter following, Barillot, returning from Italy, brought me some books, and among others the *Bontempi* and the *Cartella per Musica* of Père Banchieri. These gave me a taste for the history of music and for theoretical researches in that pleasing art. Barillot remained some time with us, and, as I had been of age for some months, I determined to go to Geneva the following spring, and demand my mother's inheritance, or at least that part of it which belonged to me, till it could be ascertained what had become of my brother. This plan was executed as it had been resolved. I went to Geneva; my father met me there, for long since he had occasionally visited Geneva without being molested, though the decree that had been pronounced against him had never

been reversed; but being esteemed for his courage, and respected for his probity, they pretended to have forgotten the affair; and the magistrates, employed with the great project that came to light some little time after, were not willing to alarm the citizens by recalling to their memory, at an improper time, this instance of their former partiality.

I apprehended that I should meet with difficulties on account of having changed my religion, but none occurred, the laws of Geneva being less harsh in that particular than those of Berne, where whoever changes his religion loses not only his citizenship, but his property. My rights, however, were not disputed, but I found my patrimony, I know not how, reduced to very little; and, though it was known almost to a certainty that my brother was dead, yet, as there was no legal proof, I could not lay claim to his share, which I left without regret to my father, who enjoyed it as long as he lived. No sooner were the necessary formalities adjusted, and I had received my money, some of which I expended in books, than I flew to lay the remainder at Mamma's feet. My heart beat with joy during the journey, and the moment in which I gave the money into her hands was to me a thousand times more delightful than that which gave it into mine. She received this with the simplicity common to great souls, who, doing similar actions without effort, see them without surprise. Indeed, with equal simplicity, this sum was almost all expended for my use, and it would have been employed in the same manner had it come from any other quarter.

Meanwhile, my health was not yet re-established; on the contrary, I decayed visibly, was pale as death, and reduced to an absolute skeleton. The beating of my arteries was

extreme, my palpitations very frequent. I was sensible of a continual oppression, and my weakness became at length so great that I could scarcely move without pain or step quickly without danger of suffocation, stoop without vertigoes, or lift even the smallest weight, which reduced me to the most tormenting inaction for a man so naturally active as myself. It is certain that my disorder was in a great measure hypochondriacal. The vapors is a malady common to people in fortunate situations: the tears I frequently shed without reason; the lively alarms I felt on the falling of a leaf, or the fluttering of a bird; inequality of humor in the calm of a most pleasing life—all marked that weariness of well-being which, so to speak, carries sensibility to extravagance. We are so little formed for felicity that when the soul and body do not suffer together, they must necessarily endure separate inconveniences, the good state of the one being almost always injurious to the happiness of the other. Had all the pleasures of life courted me, my weakened frame would not have permitted the enjoyment of them, without my being able to particularize the real seat of my complaint; yet in the decline of life, after having encountered very serious and real evils, my body seemed to regain its strength, as if on purpose to encounter additional misfortunes; and, at the moment I write this, though infirm, near sixty, and overwhelmed with every kind of sorrow, I feel more ability to suffer than I ever possessed for enjoyment, when in the very flower of my age and in the bosom of real happiness.

To complete me, I had mingled a little physiology among my other readings. I set about studying anatomy, and considering the multitude, movement, and wonderful construction

of the various parts that composed my frame. My apprehensions were instantly increased; I expected to feel the machinery deranged twenty times a day, and, far from being surprised to find myself dying, was astonished that I yet existed! I could not read the description of any malady without thinking it mine, and, had I not been already indisposed, I am certain I should have become so from this study. Finding in every disease symptoms similar to mine, I fancied I had them all, and at length gained one more troublesome than any I yet suffered, which I had thought myself delivered from: this was a violent inclination to seek a cure, which it is very difficult to suppress when once a person begins reading medical books. By searching, reflecting, and comparing, I became persuaded that the foundation of my complaint was a polypus at the heart, and Salomon appeared to coincide with the idea. Reasonably, this opinion should have confirmed my former resolution. This, however, was not the case; on the contrary, I exerted every power of my understanding in search of a remedy for a polypus at the heart, resolving to undertake this marvelous cure. In a journey which Anet had made to Montpellier, to see the botanic garden there, and visit Monsieur Sauvages, the demonstrator, he had been informed that Monsieur Fizes had cured a similar polypus. Mamma, recollecting this circumstance, mentioned it to me, and nothing more was necessary to inspire me with a desire to consult Monsieur Fizes. The hope of recovery gave me courage and strength to undertake the journey. The money from Geneva furnished the means. Mamma, far from dissuading, entreated me to go. Behold me, therefore, set out for Montpellier!

But it was not necessary to go so far to obtain the cure



I needed. Finding the motion of a horse too fatiguing, I had hired a chaise at Grenoble, and on entering Moirans five or six other chaises arrived in rank after mine. For the moment it was indeed the adventure of the *brancards*. The greater part of these were in the train of a newly married lady called Madame du Colombier; with her was a Madame de Larnage, not so young or handsome as the former, yet not less amiable, and who from Romans, where the bride was to alight, was to pursue her route to Saint-Andiol, near the Pont-Saint-Esprit. With my known timidity it will not be conjectured that I was very ready at forming an acquaintance with these fine ladies and the company that attended them; but traveling the same road, lodging at the same inns, and being obliged to eat at the same table, if I would not be thought an unsociable monster, the acquaintance was unavoidable. It was formed then, and even sooner than I desired, for all this bustle was by no means convenient to a person in ill-health, particularly to one of my humor. Curiosity renders these artful creatures extremely insinuating; they accomplish their design of becoming acquainted with a man by endeavoring to turn his brain, and this was precisely what happened to me. Madame du Colombier was too much surrounded by her young fops to have any opportunity of paying much attention to me; besides, it was not worth while, as we were to separate in so short a time; but Madame de Larnage, less besieged than her young friend, had to provide herself for the remainder of the journey. Behold me, then, attacked by Madame de Larnage, and adieu to poor Jean-Jacques, or rather farewell to fever, vapors, and polypus—all vanished in her presence, save some few palpitations of which she would not cure me.

The ill state of my health was the first subject of our conversation; they saw I was indisposed, knew I was going to Montpellier, but my air and manner certainly did not exhibit the appearance of a libertine, since it was clear by what followed that they did not suspect I was going there for a reason that carries many that road. Though a poor state of health does not form a good recommendation for a man in the eyes of ladies, it nevertheless rendered me interesting to these. In the morning they sent to inquire how I was and invite me to take chocolate with them, and when I made my appearance, asked how I had passed the night. Once, according to my praiseworthy custom of speaking without thought, I replied, "I did not know," which answer made them conclude I was a fool; but, on questioning me further, the examination turned out so far to my advantage, that I rather rose in their opinion, and I once heard Madame du Colombier say to her friend, "He is not sufficiently acquainted with the world, but he is amiable." These words were a great encouragement, and assisted me in rendering myself so.

As we became more familiar, it was natural to give each other some little account of whence we came, and who we were. This embarrassed me greatly, for I was sensible that in good company and among women of spirit the very name of a new convert would utterly undo me. I know not by what whimsicality I resolved to pass for an Englishman; however, in consequence of that determination I gave myself out for a Jacobite, and was readily believed. I called myself Dudding, and they called me Monsieur Dudding. A cursed Marquis de Torignan, who was one of the company, an invalid like myself, old and ill-tempered to boot, took it into his head to begin a

long conversation with Monsieur Dudding. He spoke of King James, of the Pretender, and the Court of St. Germain. I sat on thorns the whole time, for I was totally unacquainted with all these, except what little I had picked up in the writings of Comte Hamilton, and from the gazettes; however, I made such fortunate use of the little I did know as to extricate myself from this dilemma, happy in not being questioned on the English language, of which I did not know a single word.

The company were all very agreeable, we looked forward to the moment of separation with regret, and therefore made snails' journeys. We arrived one Sunday at Saint-Marcellin. Madame de Larnage would go to mass; I accompanied her, and had nearly ruined all my affairs, for I acted my part as usual, and by my modest, reserved countenance during the service she concluded me a bigot, and conceived a very ill opinion of me, as I learned from her own account two days after. It required a great deal of gallantry subsequently to efface this ill impression, or rather Madame de Larnage, who was not easily disheartened, determined to risk the first advances, and see how I should behave. She made several, and, far from being vain of my figure, I thought she was making sport of me; full of this ridiculous idea, there was no folly of which I was not guilty. It was worse than the Marquis in *Le Legs*. Madame de Larnage persisted in making so many inciting and tender remarks that a much wiser man than myself could hardly have taken them seriously. The more obvious her advances were, the more I was confirmed in my belief, and, what increased my torment. I found I was really in love with her. I frequently said to myself, and some-

times to her, sighing, "Ah! why is not all this real?—then should I be the most fortunate of men." I am inclined to think my stupidity did but whet her fancy; she would not be defeated.

We left Madame du Colombier and her following at Romans; after which, Madame de Larnage, the Marquis de Torignan, and myself continued our route slowly, and in the most agreeable manner. The Marquis, though indisposed and rather ill-humored, was pretty good company, but was not well pleased in eating bread while meat was roasting; for Madame de Larnage took so little care to conceal her inclinations, that he perceived it sooner than I did, and his sarcasms must have given me that confidence I could not presume to take from the kindness of the lady, if by a surmise, which no one but myself could have blundered on, I had not imagined they perfectly understood each other, and were agreed to turn my passion into ridicule. This foolish idea completed my stupidity, making me act the most ridiculous part, while, had I listened to the feelings of my heart, I might have been performing one far more brilliant. I am astonished that Madame de Larnage was not disgusted at my folly, and did not discard me with disdain; but she had sufficient knowledge of the world to perceive that there was more bashfulness than indifference in my composition.

She succeeded at length in making me understand, though not without trouble. We arrived at Valence to dinner, and according to our usual custom passed the remainder of the day there. We lodged out of the city, at the Saint-Jacques; I shall never forget this inn, nor the chamber therein which Madame de Larnage occupied. After dinner,



Madame de Larnage proposed a walk. She knew the Marquis was no walker, consequently this was an excellent plan for a tête-à-tête, which she was predetermined to make the most of, for time and opportunity grew precious. While we were walking round the city by the side of the moats, I entered on a long history of my complaint, to which she answered in so tender an accent, frequently pressing my arm, which she held to her heart, that it required all my stupidity not to be convinced of the sincerity of her attachment; and yet, strange as it may seem, I too was deeply moved. I have already observed that she was amiable; love rendered her charming, giving back to her all the loveliness of youth; and she managed her advances with so much art, that they were sufficient to have seduced the most insensible. I was therefore in very uneasy circumstances, and frequently on the point of making a declaration; but the dread of offending her, and the still greater fear of being laughed at, ridiculed, made table-talk, and complimented on my enterprise by the satirical Marquis had such unconquerable power over me that, though ashamed of my ridiculous bashfulness, I could not take courage to surmount it. I was on the rack; I had already exhausted my pretty conventional phrases, of which I felt the absurdity at such a time; and, not knowing how to look, or what to say, continued silent, giving the finest opportunity in the world for that ridicule I so much dreaded. Happily, Madame de Larnage took a kinder resolution, and suddenly interrupted this silence by throwing her arm around my neck, while at the same instant her lips spoke too plainly to mine to be any longer misunderstood. The crisis could not have come at a happier moment; I became responsive. She had







Maurice Leloir inv

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given me that confidence, the want of which has almost always prevented me from appearing myself. I was myself now; never did my eyes, my senses, my heart, my lips, express themselves so frankly and fully. Never did I make better reparation for my mistakes; and, if this little conquest had cost Madame de Larnage some difficulties, I have reason to believe she did not regret them.

Were I to live a hundred years I should ever remember with pleasure this charming woman. I say charming, for, though neither young nor beautiful, she was neither old nor ugly, having nothing in her appearance that could prevent her wit and accomplishments from producing all their effects. Unlike the generality of women, her face was the least youthful-looking of her personal qualities, and I fear the use of rouge had spoiled it. She had her reasons for being a little free; it was thus that she made a lover understand her merit. It was possible to see her without falling in love, but the man to whom she resigned herself could not fail to adore her; which proves, in my opinion, that she was not generally so prodigal of her favors. It is true, her inclination for me was so sudden and lively that it scarce appears excusable; though, in the short but charming interval I passed with her, I had reason to believe, from the restraint she sometimes insisted on, that, notwithstanding her amorous temperament, she studied my health more even than her own pleasures.

Our good intelligence did not escape the penetration of the Marquis—not that he discontinued his usual raillery; on the contrary, he treated me as a sighing, hopeless swain, languishing under the rigors of his mistress. Not a word, smile, or look escaped him by which I could imagine

he suspected my happiness; and I should have thought him completely deceived, had not Madame de Larnage, who was more clear-sighted than myself, told me that he was aware of the matter, but was a well-bred man; and, indeed, it was impossible to behave with more attention or greater civility than he constantly paid me, notwithstanding his satirical sallies, especially after my success, which, as he was unacquainted with my stupidity, he perhaps gave me the honor of achieving. It has already been seen that he was mistaken in this particular; but no matter, I profited by his error, for, being conscious that the laugh was on my side, I took all his sallies in good part, and sometimes parried them with tolerable success; for, proud to display before her that wit which Madame de Larnage had bestowed upon me, I no longer appeared the same man.

We were in a country and in a season of plenty, and had everywhere excellent cheer, thanks to the kind attention of the Marquis; though I would willingly have relinquished this advantage to have been better satisfied with the situation of our chambers; but he always sent his footman in advance to provide them; and, whether of his own accord, or by the order of his master, the rogue always took care that the Marquis's chamber should be close by Madame de Larnage's, while mine was at the farther end of the house; but that made no great difference, or perhaps it rendered our rendezvous the more charming. This happiness lasted four or five days, during which time I was intoxicated with delight, which I tasted pure and serene without any alloy, an advantage I could never boast before; and, I may add, it is owing to Madame de Larnage that I did not go out of the world without having tasted real pleasure.

If the sentiment I felt for her was not precisely love, it was at least a very tender return of that she testified for me; it was a sensuousness so glowing in the enjoyment, an intimacy so sweet in our conversations, that it possessed all the delights of love, without that kind of delirium which affects the brain, and tends to diminish happiness. I never experienced true love but once in my life, and that was not with her, neither did I feel that affection for her which I had felt, and yet continued to feel, for Madame de Warens; but, for this very reason, I possessed her a hundred times more completely. When with Madame de Warens, my felicity was always disturbed by a secret sadness, a compunction of heart, which I found it difficult to surmount. Instead of being delighted at the acquisition of so much happiness, I could not help reproaching myself for contributing to render her I loved unworthy. On the contrary, with Madame de Larnage, proud of my virility and felicity, I gave way joyfully and confidently to my desires, while my triumph redoubled every other charm.

I do not recollect exactly where we quitted the Marquis, who resided in this country, but I know we were alone on our arrival at Montélimar, where Madame de Larnage made her chambermaid get into my chaise, and accommodated me with a seat in hers. It will easily be believed that traveling in this manner was by no means displeasing to us, and that I should be very much puzzled to give any account of the country we passed through. She had some business at Montélimar, which detained her there two or three days; during this time she quitted me but one quarter of an hour, for a visit she could not avoid, which embarrassed her with a number of



invitations she had no inclination to accept, and therefore excused herself by pleading some indisposition; though she took care this should not prevent our walking together every day, in the most charming country, and under the finest sky imaginable. Oh, those three days! What reason have I to regret them! Never did such happiness return again.

The amours of a journey cannot be very durable. It was necessary we should part, and I must confess it was almost time; not that I was satiated by my happiness, for my attachment increased daily, but, in spite of the lady's discretion, little more remained to me but good-will. We endeavored to comfort each other for the pain of parting by forming plans for our reunion; and it was concluded that—the recent regiments having been so beneficial to me—after staying five or six weeks at Montpellier, which would give Madame de Larnage time to prepare for my reception in such a manner as to prevent scandal, I should return to Saint-Andiol, and spend the winter under her direction. She gave me ample instruction on what it was necessary I should know, on what it would be proper to say, and how I should conduct myself. Meanwhile we were to correspond by letter. She spoke much and earnestly on the care of my health, conjured me to consult some skillful physicians, and be attentive in following their prescriptions, she herself promising to make me do so when with her, however rigid they might be. I believe her concern was sincere, for she loved me, and gave proofs of her affection less equivocal than the prodigality of her favors: judging by my mode of traveling that I was not in very affluent circumstances, on our parting, though not rich herself, she would have had me share the contents of her purse, which she had

brought pretty well furnished from Grenoble, and it was with great difficulty I could make her put up with a denial. In a word, we parted, my heart full of her idea, and leaving in hers, if I am not mistaken, a firm attachment to me.

While pursuing the remainder of my journey, remembrance ran over everything that had passed from the commencement of it, and I was well satisfied at finding myself alone in a comfortable chaise, where I could ruminate at ease on the pleasures I had enjoyed, and those which awaited my return. I only thought of Saint-Andiol and of the delightful life I was to lead there. I saw nothing but Madame de Larnage or what related to her; the whole universe besides was nothing to me—even Mamma was forgotten! I set about combining all the details by which Madame de Larnage had endeavored to give me in advance an idea of her house, of the neighborhood, of her connections and manner of life. She had a daughter, whom she had often described in the warmest terms of maternal affection. This daughter was fifteen, lively, charming, and of an amiable disposition. Madame de Larnage promised me her friendship; I had not forgotten that promise, and was curious to know how Mademoiselle de Larnage would treat her mother's dear friend. These were the subjects of my reveries from Pont-Saint-Esprit to Remoulin. I had been advised to visit the Pont du Gard, and did not fail to do so. After a breakfast at which I ate some excellent figs, I hired a guide, and set out. Hitherto I had seen none of the remaining monuments of Roman magnificence, and I expected to find this worthy the hands by which it was constructed; for once, the reality surpassed my expectation. This was the only time in my life it ever did so, and Romans alone could have produced

that effect. The view of this noble and sublime work struck me the more forcibly from being in the midst of a desert, X where silence and solitude render the object more striking, and admiration more lively, for, though called a bridge, it is nothing more than an aqueduct. One cannot help exclaiming, What strength could have transported these enormous stones so far from any quarry? And what motive could have united the labors of so many <sup>dozens</sup> millions of men, in a place that no one inhabited? I passed over the three stages of this superb edifice with a veneration which made me reluctant to trample on its stones. In the echo of my footsteps under these immense arches I seemed to hear the mighty voices of their builders. I felt myself a mere insect, lost in this vastness, and yet, with all this sense of littleness, experienced an elevation of the soul, and murmured with a sigh, "Why was I not born a Roman?" I remained whole hours in the most ravishing contemplation, and returned pensive and thoughtful to my inn. This reverie was by no means favorable to Madame de Larnage; she had taken care to forewarn me against the girls of Montpellier, but not against the Pont du Gard. It is impossible to anticipate every contingency.

On my arrival at Nîmes, I went to see the Amphitheatre, which is a far more magnificent work than the Pont du Gard, yet it made a much less impression on me, perhaps because my admiration had been already exhausted on the former object, or that the situation of the latter, in the midst of a city, was less proper to excite it. This vast and superb circus is surrounded by small dirty houses, while others yet smaller and dirtier fill up the arena in such a manner that the whole produces an unequal and confused effect, in which

regret and indignation stifle pleasure and surprise. I have since seen the Amphitheatre at Verona, which is a vast deal smaller and less beautiful than that at Nîmes, but preserved with all possible care and neatness, by which means alone it made a much stronger and more agreeable impression on me. The French pay no regard to these things, respect no monument of antiquity; ever eager to undertake, they never finish or conserve.

I was so much better, and had gained such an appetite by exercise, that I stopped a whole day at the Pont de Lunel, for the sake of good entertainment and company, this being deservedly esteemed at that time the best inn in Europe, for those who kept it, knowing how to make its fortunate situation turn to advantage, took care to provide both abundance and variety. It was really curious to find in a lonely country-house a table every day furnished with sea and fresh-water fish, excellent game, and choice wines, served up with all the attention and care which are only to be expected among the great or opulent, and all this for thirty-five sous each person. But the Pont de Lunel did not long remain on this footing, for the proprietor, presuming too much on its reputation, at length lost it entirely.

During this journey I really forgot my complaints, but recollected them again on my arrival at Montpellier. My vapors were absolutely gone, but every other complaint remained, and though custom had rendered them less troublesome, they were still sufficient to make anyone who had been suddenly seized with them suppose himself attacked by some mortal disease. In effect, they were rather alarming than painful, and made the mind suffer more than the body, though



it apparently threatened the latter with destruction. While my attention was called off by the vivacity of my passions, I paid no attention to my health; but, as my complaints were not altogether imaginary, I thought of them seriously when the tumult had subsided. Recollecting the salutary advice of Madame de Larnage, and the cause of my journey, I consulted the most famous practitioners, particularly Monsieur Fizes, and, through an excess of precaution, boarded at the house of a doctor—an Irishman named Fitz-Morris. This person boarded a number of young gentlemen who were studying physic, and, what rendered his house very commodious for an invalid, Monsieur Fitz-Morris contented himself with a moderate pension for provision and lodging, and took nothing of his boarders for attendance as a physician. He undertook to execute the orders of Monsieur Fizes, and endeavor to re-establish my health. He certainly acquitted himself very well in this employment; as to regimen, indigestions were not to be gained at his table; and though I am not much hurt at privations of that kind, the objects of comparison were so near, that I could not help thinking to myself sometimes that Monsieur de Torignan was a much better purveyor than Monsieur Fitz-Morris; notwithstanding, as there was no danger of dying with hunger, and all the youths were gay and good-humored, I believe this manner of living was really serviceable, and prevented my falling into those languors to which I had been subject. I passed the morning in taking medicines, particularly some kind of waters (I believe they were those of Vals), and in writing to Madame de Larnage; for the correspondence was regularly kept up, and Rousseau undertook to receive letters for his friend Dudding. At noon I took a walk

to La Canourgue, with some of our young boarders, who were all very good lads; after this we assembled for dinner; when this was over, an affair of importance employed most of us till night—this was going a little way out of town to take our afternoon's collation, and make up two or three parties at mall. As I had neither strength nor skill, I did not play myself, but I betted on the games, and, interested for the success of my wager, followed the players and their balls over rough and stony roads, procuring by this means both an agreeable and salutary exercise. We took our afternoon's refreshment at an inn outside the city. I need not observe that these meetings were extremely merry, but must not omit that they were equally innocent, though the girls of the house were very pretty. Monsieur Fitz-Morris, who was a great mall-player himself, was our president, and I can declare, notwithstanding the ill reputation generally bestowed on students, that I found more virtuous dispositions among these youths than could easily be found among an equal number of men; they were rather noisy than fond of wine, and more merry than licentious. I accustomed myself so much to this mode of life, and it accorded so much with my humor, that I should have been very well content with a continuance of it. Several of my fellow-boarders were Irish, from whom I endeavored to learn some English words, as a precaution for my visit to Saint-Andiol. The time now drew near for my departure thither; every letter Madame de Larnage wrote, she entreated me not to delay it, and I prepared to obey her. I was convinced that the physicians, who understood nothing of my disorder, looked on my complaint as imaginary, and treated me accordingly with their *squine*, their waters and whey. In this

respect physicians and philosophers differ widely from theologians, admitting the truth only of what they can explain, and making their knowledge the measure of possibilities. These gentlemen understood nothing of my illness, which did not absolutely invalidate me, and who would presume to doubt the profound skill of a physician? I plainly saw that they only meant to keep me amused, and make me swallow my money; and, judging their substitute at Saint-Andiol would do me quite as much service, and more agreeably, I resolved to give her the preference; full, therefore, of this wise resolution, I quitted Montpellier.

I set off towards the end of November, after a stay of six weeks or two months in that city, where I left a dozen louis, without either my health or understanding being the better for it, if I except a short course of anatomy begun under Monsieur Fitz-Morris, which I was soon obliged to abandon owing to the horrible stench of the bodies he dissected, which I found it impossible to endure.

Not thoroughly satisfied in my own mind as to the rectitude of this expedition, as I advanced towards Pont-Saint-Esprit, which was equally the road to Saint-Andiol and to Chambéri, I began to reflect on Mamma, the remembrance of whose letters, though less frequent than those of Madame de Larnage, awakened in my heart a remorse that passion had stifled in the first part of my journey, but which became so lively on my return that, setting a just estimate on the love of pleasure, I found myself in such a situation of mind that I could listen wholly to the voice of reason. Besides, in acting the part of an adventurer, I might be less fortunate than I had been in the beginning; for it was only necessary that in

all Saint-Andiol there should be one person who had been in England, or who knew the English, or anything of their language, to prove me an impostor. The family of Madame de Larnage might not be pleased with me, and would, perhaps, treat me impolitely; her daughter, of whom I thought too frequently, made me uneasy. I trembled lest I should fall in love with this girl, and that very fear had already half done the business. Was I going, in return for the mother's bounties, to seek the ruin of the daughter—to sow dissension, dishonor, scandal, and hell itself, in her family? The very idea struck me with horror, and I took a firm resolution to combat and vanquish this unhappy attachment, should I be so unfortunate as to experience it. But why expose myself to this combat? How wretched the condition of one living with a mother, of whom he grows weary, and enamored of her daughter, to whom he dares not disclose his passion! Why rush upon misfortunes, affronts, and remorse, for the sake of pleasures whose greatest charm was already exhausted? For I was sensible that this attachment had lost its first vivacity. The relish for pleasure remained, but passion had fled. With these thoughts were mingled reflections relative to my situation and my duty to my good and generous Mamma, who, already loaded with debts, would become more so from the foolish expenses I was running into, and whom I was deceiving so unworthily. This reproach at length became so keen that it triumphed in the end; and, on approaching Saint-Esprit, I formed the resolution to refrain from stopping at Saint-Andiol, and continue my journey right forward to Chambéry. I executed this resolution courageously, with some sighs I confess, but with the heartfelt satisfaction, which I enjoyed.



for the first time in my life, of saying, "I merit my own esteem, and know how to prefer duty to pleasure." This was the first real obligation I owed my books, since these had taught me to reflect and compare. After the virtuous principles I had so lately adopted, after all the rules of wisdom and honor I had proposed to myself, and felt so proud to follow, the shame of possessing so little stability, and contradicting so egregiously my own maxims, triumphed over the allurements of pleasure. Pride had, perhaps, as much share in my resolution as virtue; but if this pride is not virtue itself, its effects are so similar that we are pardonable in deceiving ourselves.

One advantage resulting from good actions is that they elevate the soul to a disposition of attempting still better; for, such is human weakness, that we must place among our good deeds an abstinence from those crimes that we are tempted to commit. No sooner was my resolution confirmed than I became another man, or rather I became what I was before I had erred, and what the intoxication of the moment had concealed. Full of worthy sentiments and wise resolutions, I continued my journey, intending to explate my fault, to regulate my future conduct by the laws of virtue, to dedicate myself without reserve to that best of mothers, to whom I vowed as much fidelity in future as I felt real attachment, and to know no other love but the love of duty. The sincerity of this return to virtue appeared to promise a better destiny; but mine, alas! was fixed, and already begun; and while my heart, full of good and virtuous sentiments, was contemplating only innocence and happiness through life, I touched on the fatal period that was to draw after it the long chain of my misfortunes!





Goulet fils et







My impatience to end my journey had made me use more diligence than I intended. I had sent a letter from Valence, mentioning the day and hour I should arrive, but I had gained half a day on this calculation, which time I passed at Chapa-rillan, that I might arrive exactly at the time I mentioned. I wished to enjoy to its full extent the pleasure of seeing her, and preferred deferring this happiness a little, that expectancy might increase its value. This precaution had always succeeded; heretofore my arrival had caused a little holiday; I expected no less this time; and these preparations, so dear to me, would have been well worth the trouble of contriving them.

I came then exactly at the hour, and while at a considerable distance, looked forward with an expectancy of seeing her on the road to meet me. The beating of my heart increased as I drew near the house. At length I arrived, quite out of breath, for I had left my chaise in the town. I see no one in the garden, at the door, or at the windows; I am seized with terror, fearful that some accident has happened. I enter, all is quiet; the laborers are eating their luncheon in the kitchen, and, far from observing any preparation, the servant seems surprised to see me, not knowing I was expected. I go upstairs. At length I see her—that dear Mamma, so tenderly, truly, and entirely beloved. I run towards her, and throw myself at her feet. “Ah, child!” said she, “art thou returned then?” embracing me at the same time; “have you had a good journey? How do you do?” This reception disconcerted me for some moments. I then asked whether she had received my letter. She answered, “Yes.” “I should have thought not,” replied I; and the matter concluded there.

A young man was with her at this time. I recollected having seen him in the house before my departure, but at present he seemed established there; in short, he was so; I found my place already supplied!

This young man came from the country of Vaud; his father, named Vintzenried, was Keeper—or, as he expressed himself, Captain—of the Castle of Chillon. This son of this Captain was a journeyman peruke-maker, and gained his living in that capacity when he first presented himself to Madame de Warens, who received him kindly, as she did all comers, particularly those from her own country. He was a tall, fair, silly-looking youth; well enough made, with an unmeaning face, and a mind of the same description, speaking always like the beau in a comedy, and mingling the manners and customs of his former situation with a long history of his successes with ladies; naming, according to his account, not above half the Marchionesses who had favored him, and pretending never to have dressed the head of a pretty woman without having likewise decorated her husband's; vain, foolish, ignorant, and insolent; such was the substitute taken in my absence, and the companion offered me on my return.

Oh! if souls disengaged from their terrestrial bonds yet view from the bosom of eternal light what passes here below, pardon, dear and honored shade, that I show no more favor to your failings than my own, but equally unveil both to my readers' eyes. I ought, and will, be as just to you as to myself; how much less will you lose by this resolution than I shall! How much do your amiable and gentle disposition, your inexhaustible goodness of heart, your frankness, and other admirable virtues compensate for your weakness, if errors of reason

alone can be called such! You had errors, but not vices; your conduct was reprehensible, but your heart was ever pure.

The new-comer had shown himself zealous and exact in all her little commissions, which were very numerous, and he diligently overlooked the laborers. As noisy and insolent as I was quiet and forbearing, he was seen, or rather heard, at the plough, in the hay-loft, wood-house, stable, farm-yard, at the same instant. He neglected the gardening, this labor being too peaceful and moderate; his chief pleasure was to load or drive the cart, to saw or cleave wood; he was never seen without a hatchet or pick-axe in his hand, running, knocking, and hallooing with all his might. I know not how many men's labor he performed, but he certainly made noise enough for ten or a dozen at least. All this bustle impressed poor Mamma; she thought this young man a treasure, and, willing to attach him to herself, employed the means she imagined necessary for that purpose, not forgetting what she most depended on, the surrender of her person.

My readers should be able to form some judgment of my heart; its sentiments were the most constant and sincere, particularly those which had brought me back to Chambéri. What a sudden and complete overthrow was this to my whole being! To judge fully of this, the reader must place himself in my situation. I saw all the future felicity I had promised myself vanish in a moment; all the charming ideas I had indulged so affectionately disappear entirely; and I, who even from childhood had not been able to consider my existence for a moment as separate from hers, for the first time saw myself utterly alone. This moment was dreadful, and those that succeeded it were always gloomy. I was yet young, but



the pleasing sentiments of enjoyment and hope which enliven youth were extinguished. From that hour my existence seemed half annihilated. I contemplated in advance the melancholy remains of an insipid life, and if at any time an image of happiness glanced through my mind, it was not that which appeared natural to me, and I felt that, even should I obtain it, I could never be truly happy.

I was so dull of apprehension, and my confidence in her was so great, that, notwithstanding the familiar tone of the new-comer, which I looked on as an effect of Mamma's easy disposition, which rendered her free with everyone, I never should have suspected his real situation had not she herself informed me of it; but she hastened to make this avowal with a freedom calculated to inflame me with resentment, could my heart have turned to that point. Speaking of this connection as quite immaterial with respect to herself, she reproached me with negligence in household affairs, and mentioned my frequent absence, as though she had been of such a temperament that she was obliged soon to supply my place. "Ah, Mamma!" said I, my heart bursting with the most poignant grief, "what do you dare to tell me? Is this the reward of an attachment like mine? Have you so many times preserved my life, for the sole purpose of taking from me all that could render it desirable? Your infidelity will bring me to the grave, but you will regret my loss!" She answered, with a tranquillity sufficient to distract me, that I talked like a child; that people did not die from such light causes; that I had lost nothing; that our friendship need be no less sincere, nor we any less intimate in every sense, for that her tender attachment to me could neither diminish nor

end but with herself. In a word, she gave me to understand that my former rights held good, and that in sharing them with another I suffered no deprivation.

Never did the purity, truth, and force of my attachment to her appear more evident: never did I feel the sincerity and honesty of my soul more forcibly than at that moment. "No, Mamma," replied I, with the most violent agitation, "I love you too much to disgrace you thus far, and too truly to share you; the regret that accompanied the first acquisition of your favors has continued to increase with my affection; I cannot preserve them on such terms. You shall ever have my adoration; be worthy of it; I had rather honor you than be your lover. It is to you, O my dearest friend! that I resign my rights; it is to the union of our hearts that I sacrifice my pleasure; rather would I perish a thousand times than taste enjoyment which might degrade her I love."

I preserved this resolution with a constancy worthy, I may say, of the sentiment that gave it birth. From this moment I saw this beloved Mamma but with the eyes of a real son. It should be remarked here that this resolve did not meet her private approbation, as I too well perceived; yet she never employed the least art to make me renounce it, either by insinuating proposals, caresses, or any of those means which women so well know how to employ without exposing themselves to censure, and which seldom fail to succeed. Reduced to seek a fate independent of hers, and not able to devise one, I passed to the other extreme, placing my happiness so absolutely in her that I became almost regardless of myself. The ardent desire to see her happy, at any cost, absorbed all my affections; it was in vain she endeavored to

separate her felicity from mine ; I felt I had a part in it, in spite of every impediment.

Thus, those virtues, whose seeds in my heart began to spring up with my misfortunes, which had been cultivated by study, only waited the fermentation of adversity to become prolific. The first fruit of this disinterested disposition was to put from my heart every sentiment of hatred and envy against him who had supplanted me. I even sincerely wished to attach myself to this young man ; to form and educate him ; to make him sensible of his happiness, and, if possible, render him worthy of it : in a word, to do for him what Anet had formerly done for me. But the similarity of dispositions was wanting. More insinuating and enlightened than Anet, I possessed neither his coolness, fortitude, nor commanding strength of character, which I must have had in order to succeed. Neither did the young man possess those qualities which Anet found in me ; such as docility, gratitude, and above all, the knowledge of a want of his instructions, and an ardent desire to render them useful. All these were wanting ; the person I wished to improve saw in me nothing but an importunate, chattering pedant ; while, on the contrary, he admired his own importance in the house, measuring the services he thought he rendered by the noise he made, and looking on his hatchets and pick-axes as infinitely more useful than all my old books ; and perhaps in this particular he might not be altogether blamable, but he gave himself a number of airs sufficient to make anyone die with laughter. With the peasants he assumed the airs of a country gentleman ; presently he did as much with me, and at length with Mamma herself. His name, Vintzenried, did not appear noble enough ;

he therefore changed it to that of Monsieur de Courtilles, and by the latter appellation he was thenceforth known at Chambéri, and in Maurienne, where he married.

At length this illustrious person gave himself such airs of consequence that he was everything in the house, and myself nothing. When I had the misfortune to displease him, he scolded Mamma, and a fear of exposing her to his brutality rendered me subservient to all his whims, so that every time he cleaved wood—an office which he performed with singular pride—it was necessary I should be an idle spectator and admirer of his prowess. This lad was not, however, of a bad disposition. He loved Mamma because, indeed, it was impossible to do otherwise; nor had he any aversion even to me, and, when he happened to be out of his airs, would listen to our admonitions and frankly own he was a fool; yet, notwithstanding these acknowledgments, his follies were as numerous as before. His knowledge was so contracted, and his inclinations so mean, that it was useless to reason, and almost impossible to be pleased with him. Not content with a most charming woman, he fancied an old red-haired, toothless waiting-maid, whose unwelcome service Mamma had the patience to endure, though it was absolutely disgusting. I soon perceived this new intrigue, and was exasperated at it; but I saw something else, which affected me yet more, and made a deeper impression on me than anything had hitherto done. This was a visible coldness in Mamma's behavior towards me.

The privation I had imposed on myself, and which she affected to approve, is one of those affronts which women scarcely ever forgive. Take the most sensible, the most



philosophic female, one the least attached to pleasures of the senses, and slighting her favors, if within your reach, will be found the most unpardonable crime, even though she may care nothing for the man. This rule is certainly without exception, since a sympathy so natural and ardent was impaired in her by an abstinence founded only on virtue, attachment, and esteem. I no longer found with her that union of hearts which constituted all the happiness of mine. She seldom spoke to me with frankness but when she had occasion to complain of this new-comer, for, when they were agreed, I enjoyed but little of her confidence, and at length was scarcely ever consulted in her affairs. She seemed pleased, indeed, with my company, but had I passed whole days without seeing her she would hardly have missed me.

Insensibly, I found myself desolate and alone in that house where I had formerly been the very soul—where, if I may so express myself, I had enjoyed a double life—and, by degrees, I accustomed myself to disregard everything that passed, and even those who dwelt there. To avoid continual mortifications, I shut myself up with my books, or else wept and sighed unnoticed in the woods. This life soon became insupportable. I felt that the presence of a woman so dear to me, while estranged from her heart, increased my unhappiness, and was persuaded that, ceasing to see her, I should feel myself less cruelly separated. I resolved, therefore, to quit the house, mentioned it to her, and she, far from opposing my resolution, approved it. She had an acquaintance at Grenoble called Madame Deybens, whose husband was on terms of friendship with Monsieur de Mably, chief provost of

Lyons. Monsieur Deybens proposed my educating Monsieur de Mably's children. I accepted this offer, and departed for Lyons, without causing, and almost without feeling, the least regret at a separation the bare idea of which, a few months before, would have given us both the most excruciating torments.

I had almost as much knowledge as was necessary for a tutor, and flattered myself that my method would be unexceptionable; but the year I passed at Monsieur de Mably's was sufficient to undeceive me in that particular. The natural gentleness of my disposition seemed calculated for the employment, if a hasty temper had not been mingled with it. While things went favorably, and I saw the pains, which I did not spare, succeed, I was an angel; but a devil when they went contrary. If my pupils did not understand me, I was thrown off my balance, and when they showed any symptoms of an untoward disposition, I was so provoked that I could have killed them: which behavior was not likely to render them either good or wise. I had two under my care, and they were of very different tempers. Ste.-Marie, who was between eight and nine years old, had a good person and quick apprehension, was giddy, lively, playful, and mischievous; but his mischief was ever good-humored. The younger one, named Condillac, appeared stupid and fidgety, was headstrong as a mule, and seemed incapable of instruction. It may be supposed that between both I did not want employment, yet with patience and temper I might have succeeded; but wanting both, I did nothing worth mentioning, and my pupils profited very little. Assiduity was not lacking, but I needed evenness of temper, and above all prudence. I could only make use

of three means, which are very weak, and often pernicious with children—namely, sentiment, reasoning, passion. I sometimes spoke so earnestly and tenderly to Ste.-Marie that I could not refrain from tears, and wished to excite similar sensations in him, as if it were reasonable to suppose a child could be susceptible of such emotions. Sometimes I exhausted myself in reasoning, as if persuaded he could comprehend me; and as he frequently hit upon very subtle arguments, concluded he must be reasonable, because he bade fair to be so good a logician. The little Condillac was still more embarrassing, for he neither understood, nor answered, nor was concerned at anything; he was of an obstinacy beyond belief, and was never happier than when he had succeeded in putting me in a rage; then, indeed, he was the philosopher, and I the child. I was conscious of all my faults, studied the tempers of my pupils, and do not think they ever succeeded in duping me; but where was the use of seeing the evil without being able to apply a remedy? My penetration was unavailing, since it never prevented any mischief, and everything I undertook failed, because all I did to effect my designs was precisely what I ought not to have done.

I was not more fortunate in what only had reference to myself than in what concerned my pupils. Madame Deybens, in recommending me to her friend Madame de Mably, had requested her to form my manners, and endeavor to give me an air of the world. She took some pains on this account, wishing to teach me how to do the honors of the house; but I was so awkward, bashful, and stupid, that she found it necessary to stop there. This, however, did not prevent me from falling in love with her, according to my usual custom.

I even behaved in such a manner that she could not avoid observing it; but I never dared declare my passion, and, as the lady never seemed in a humor to make advances, I soon became weary of my sighs and ogling, being convinced they answered no manner of purpose.

I had quite lost my inclination for petty thefts while with Mamma; indeed, as everything belonged to me, there was nothing to steal; besides, the elevated notions I had imbibed ought to have rendered me in future above such meanness, and generally speaking they certainly did so; but this proceeded less from my having learned to conquer temptations, than having succeeded in rooting out the propensity, and I should even now greatly dread stealing, as in my infancy, were I yet subject to the same inclinations. I had a proof of this at Monsieur de Mably's, where, though surrounded by a number of little things that I could easily have pilfered, and which appeared no temptation, I took it into my head to covet some white Arbois wine, a few glasses of which I had drunk at table, and thought delicious. It happened to be rather thick, and, as I fancied myself an excellent finer of wine, I mentioned my skill, and this was accordingly trusted to my care; but in attempting to mend I spoiled it, though to the sight only, for it remained equally agreeable to the taste. Profiting by this opportunity, I furnished myself from time to time with a few bottles to drink in my own apartment; but, unluckily, I could never drink without eating—the difficulty lay, therefore, in procuring bread. It was impossible to make a reserve of this article, and to have it bought for me by the footman was discovering myself, and insulting the master of the house. I dared not purchase it myself: how could a fine



gentleman, with a sword by his side, enter a baker shop to buy a small loaf of bread? It was utterly impossible. At length I recollected the saying of a great princess, who, on being informed that the country-people had no bread, replied, "Then let them eat pastry." Yet even this resource was attended with a difficulty. I sometimes went out alone for this very purpose, running over the whole city, and passing thirty pastry-cooks' shops without daring to enter any one of them. In the first place, it was necessary there should be only one person in the shop, and that person's physiognomy must be so encouraging as to give me confidence to pass the threshold; but when once the dear little cake was procured, and I was shut up in my chamber with that and a bottle of wine, taken cautiously from the bottom of a cupboard, how much did I enjoy my little draughts, while reading a few pages of a novel—for when I have no company I always like to read while eating; it seems a substitute for society, and I despatch alternately a page and a morsel; 'tis, indeed, as if my book dined with me.

I was neither dissolute nor sottish, never in my whole life having been intoxicated with liquor. My little thefts were not very indiscreet, yet they were discovered—the bottles betrayed me, and, though no notice was taken of it, I had no longer the management of the cellar. In all this Monsieur de Mably conducted himself with prudence and politeness, being really a very deserving man, who, under a manner as harsh as his employment, concealed a real gentleness of disposition and uncommon goodness of heart. He was judicious, equitable, and—what would not be expected from an officer of the Maréchaussée—very humane. Sensible of his indulgence, I became

greatly attached to him, which made my stay in his house longer than it would otherwise have been; but at length, disgusted with an employment which I was not calculated for, and a situation of great confinement, consequently disagreeable to me, after a year's trial, during which time I spared no pains to fulfill my engagement, I determined to quit my pupils, being convinced that I should never succeed in educating them properly. Monsieur de Mably saw this as clearly as myself, though I am inclined to think he would never have dismissed me had I not spared him the trouble, which was an excess of condescension in this particular that I certainly cannot justify.

What rendered my situation yet more insupportable was the comparison I was continually drawing between the life I now led and that which I had quitted: the remembrance of my dear Charmettes, my garden, trees, fountain, and orchard, but, above all, the company of her for whom I was born, and who was truly the soul of these enjoyments. On calling to mind our pleasures and innocent life, I was seized with such oppression and heaviness of heart as deprived me of the power of action. A hundred times I was tempted instantly to set off on foot to her, being persuaded that, could I once more see her, I should be content to die that moment. In fine, I could no longer resist the tender emotions which recalled me back to her, whatever it might cost me. I accused myself of not having been sufficiently patient, complaisant, and kind; concluding I might yet live happily with her on the terms of tender friendship, and by showing more for her than I had hitherto done. I formed the finest projects in the world, burned to execute them, left all, renounced everything,

departed, fled, and arriving in all the transports of my early youth, found myself once more at her feet. Alas! I should have died there with joy had I found in her reception, in her embrace, or in her heart, one quarter of what I had formerly found there, and of which I yet felt the undiminished warmth.

Fearful illusion of transitory things! She received me with that excellence of heart which could only die with her; but I sought a past which could never be recalled, and had hardly been half an hour with her before I was once more convinced that my former happiness had vanished for ever, and that I was in the same melancholy situation which I had been obliged to fly from, yet without being able to accuse any person of my unhappiness, for Courtilles really was not to blame, appearing to see my return with more pleasure than dissatisfaction. But how could I bear to be a secondary person with her to whom I had been everything, and who could never cease being such to me? How could I live an alien in that house where I had been the child? The sight of every object that had been witness to my former happiness rendered the comparison yet more distressing. I should have suffered less in any other habitation, for this incessantly recalled pleasing remembrances that embittered the consciousness of my loss. Consumed with vain regrets, given up to the most gloomy melancholy, I resumed the custom of remaining alone, except at meals. Shut up with my books, I sought to give some useful diversion to my ideas, and feeling the imminent danger of want, which I had so long dreaded, I sought means to provide against it when Mamma should have no other resource. I had placed her household on such a footing that affairs could proceed without growing

worse, but since my departure everything had become altered. He who now managed her affairs was a spendthrift, and wished to make a great appearance, such as keeping a good horse with elegant trappings, loving to appear gay in the eyes of the neighbors, and was perpetually undertaking something he did not understand. Her pension was taken up in advance, her rent was in arrears, debts of every kind continued to accumulate. I could plainly foresee that her pension would soon be seized, and perhaps suppressed. In short, I expected nothing but ruin and misfortune, and the moment appeared to approach so rapidly that I already felt all its horrors.

My little library was my only amusement, and the habit of searching for remedies for the sufferings of my mind determined me to seek some against the evil of those distressing circumstances which I daily expected would fall upon us; so, returning to my old chimeras, behold me once more building castles in the air to relieve this dear friend from the cruel extremities into which I saw her ready to fall. I did not believe myself qualified to shine in the republic of letters, or to stand any chance of making a fortune by that means; a new idea, therefore, inspired me with that confidence which the mediocrity of my talents could not impart. In ceasing to teach music I had not abandoned it. On the contrary, I had studied the theory sufficiently to consider myself well informed on the subject. When reflecting on the trouble it had cost me to read music, and the great difficulty I yet experienced in singing at sight, I began to think the fault might as well arise from the manner of noting as from my own dullness, being sensible it was an art which most people find difficult to understand. By examining the



formation of the signs, I was convinced they were frequently very ill devised. I had before thought of marking the gamut by figures, to prevent the trouble of having to draw lines, or of noting the plainest air, but had been stopped by the difficulty of the octaves, and by the distinction of measure and quantity. This idea returned again to my mind, and, on a careful revision of it, I found the difficulties were by no means insurmountable. I pursued it successfully, and was at length able to note any music whatever by figures, with the greatest exactitude, and simplicity. From this moment I supposed my fortune made, and, in the ardor of sharing it with her to whom I owed everything, thought only of going to Paris, not doubting that, on presenting my project to the Academy, it would produce a revolution. I had brought some money from Lyons. I augmented this stock by the sale of my books, and in the course of a fortnight my resolution was both formed and executed. My enthusiasm was as ardent and my trust in the future as great as it had been when, years before, I had started on my journey with Monsieur Bâcle. I saw only the object I had in view, and took no count of the difficulties or dangers I might encounter in my path, or even of the possible bitter disappointment at my journey's end. In short, full of the magnificent ideas it had inspired, and which were common to me on every occasion, I departed from Savoy with my new system of music, as I had formerly done from Turin with my heron-fountain.

Such have been the errors and failings of my youth. I have related the history of them with a fidelity which my heart approves; if my riper years were dignified with some



















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